RUGBY LEAGUE: Paul Fitzpatrick on the second Test: Great Britain 4, Australia 34

Britain battered and bewildered

GREAT BRITAIN'S coach Maurice Bamford and his assistants, Phil Larder and Les Bettinson, are not to be envied after the Elland Road experience. They must attempt to restore shattered morale and find a side which might give the Australians some sort of challenge in the third and final Whitbread Test at Wigan next week — a game that carries World Cup points.

Having hastily invested his faith in the men who lost at Old Trafford, Bamford now has to decide if this team cannot be improved. Some supporters on Saturday had made up their minds long before the end, resorting to the refrain familiar to England's soccer players: "What a load of rubbish."

Peter Sterling, a generous spirit as well as a superlative player, would not accept that. He maintained the British player of 1986 was superior to his 1982 counterpart, that there are youngsters of great promise emerging who deserve as much patience as can be spared. "It is easy to say these things after you have just won a game, but I promise you I am not being condescending or patronising."

The Australian scrum-half was also clear in his mind where the difference lies. The set-up in Sydney and Brisbane is geared to produce, in quantity, players of quality able to cope with high pressure Rugby League.

Far too many clubs, coaches, players and administrators here are prepared to settle for less than excellence. The outcome, when the game is played at its highest level, is trouncings such as Saturday's. It was the Australians' 12th straight victory over Britain since Bradford 1978, and in the second half the divide looked as wide as it had ever done during that period.

The brilliance of this touring side should not be minimised. Ken Arthurson, president of the Australian RL, places them above the 1982 "Invincibles." That might not receive wholehearted endorsement but, if they are not as good, then there is precious little in it.

Australia's dominance stemmed from two half-backs, Sterling and Lewis, who are absolute class. Fox was made to look a pitifully limited scrum-half by the astounding energy and creativity of Sterling; Lewis simply is in a category apart. There can be no more complete footballer in the game.

Yet neither won Australia's Man-of-the-Match award. That went to Noel Cleal, whose strength and pace in the second row was more than Britain could cope with.

Britain showed commendable determination for almost half an hour, holding the Australians to a penalty from O'Connor (another 14 points for him) after three minutes. But then one of Britain's many embarrassing mistakes in the series set the tourists on their way as Fox's ill-conceived pass struck an unprepared Ward and fell to ground. Australia won the scrum and seconds later Cleal was picking his way for Lindner to touch down.

The British defence was left naked again five minutes later when O'Connor sprinted clear, kicked ahead, picked up and touched down.

The gaps widened, Britain's resolve began to drain away, and Lewis, Jack (twice) and Kenny scythed through the home defences. The only blemish on Australia's performance was a blunder between Jack and O'Connor just before the end which allowed Schofield to touch down. Has there ever been a more irrelevant try?

GREAT BRITAIN: LYDON (Wigan); Ledger (St. Helens), Schofield (Hull), Marchant (Castleford), Gill (Wigan); Myler (Widnes), (Edwards, Wigan, 58 minutes). Fox (Featherstone Rovers), Ward (Castleford), Watkinson (Hull KR), (Platt, St. Helens, 20 minutes), Fieldhouse (St. Helens), Crooks (Hull), Potter (Wigan), Goodway (Wigan).

AUSTRALIA: Jack, O'Connor, Kenny, Miles, Shearer; Lewis, Sterling (Lamb 79 minutes), Dowling, Simmons, Dunn, Cleal, Niebling (Meninga, 78 minutes), Lindner.

SOCCER RESULTS

TODAY LEAGUE — FIRST DIVISION: Arsenal 0, West Ham 0; Coventry 1, Nottingham Forest 0; Everton 2, Chelsea 2; Leicester 1, Newcastle 1; Manchester City 3, Aston Villa 1; Norwich 2, Tottehnham 1; Oxford United 2, Manchester United 0; QPR 1, Liverpool 3; Sheffield Wednesday 3, Southampton 1; Watford 4, Charlton 1; Wimbledon 0, Luton 1. Leading positions: 1, Liverpool (P 14, Pts 26); 2, Nottingham Forest (P 16, Pts 26); 3, Arsenal (P 14, Pts 25).

SECOND DIVISION: Birmingham 1, Oldham 3; Blackburn 0, Sheffield United 2; Crystal Palace 0, Grimsby 3; Derby 2, Ipswich 1; Huddersfield 2, Brighton 1; Hull 0, Stoke 4; Millwall 1, Leeds 0, Portsmouth 2, Bradford 1; Reading 0, Barnsley 0; Shrewsbury 1, Plymouth 1; Sunderland 0, West Bromwich 3 Leading positions: 1, Portsmouth (P 14, Pts 29); 2, Oldham (P 14, Pts 28); 3, Leeds United (P 14 24).

THIRD DIVISION: Blackpool 1, Rotherham 0; Bolton 0, Newport 1; Bournemouth 2, Carlisle 1; Bristol Rovers 1, Bury 1; Chester 1, Brentford 1; Darlington 0, Middlesbrough 1; Fulham 0, Bristol City 3; Mansfield 0, Swindon 0; Notts County 2, Walsall 1; Port Vale 0, Wigan 1; York 1, Chesterfield 1. Friday: Doncaster 2, Gillingham 0. Leading positions: 1, Middlesbrough (P 16, Pts 32); 2, Gillingham (P 15, Pts 31); 3, Bournemouth (P 15, Pts 30)

FOURTH DIVISION: Cambridge 3, Burnley 1, Cardiff 0, Southend 2; Crewe 1, Wrexham 1; Exeter 1, Peterbrough 1; Hereford 0, Lincoln 0; Northampton 3, Preston 1; Rochdale 0, Hartlepool 2; Torquay 1, Wolverhampton 2; Tranmere 1, Swansea 1. Friday: Colchester 0, Orient 0. Sunday: Aldershot 3, Stockport 1; Scunthorpe 2, Halifax 1. Leading positions: 1, Northampton (P 16, Pts 41); 2, Swansea (P 16, Pts 31); 3, Southend (P 15, Pts 30).

FINE FARE SCOTTISH LEAGUE — PREMIER DIVISION: Aberdeen 0, St Mirren 0; Clydebank 0, Hearts 3; Dundee United 0, Dundee 3; Hamilton 1, Celtic 2; Hibernian 1, Falkirk 0; Rangers 0, Motherwell 1. Leading positions: 1, Celtic (P 16, 27 pts); 2, Dundee United (P 17, Pts 25); 3, Hearts (P 17, Pts 22).

FIRST DIVISION: Airdrie 3, Montrose 0; Clyde 3, Partick 3; Dumbarton 2, Morton 1; East Fife 2, Dunfermline 1; Forfar 0, Brechin 1; Kilmarnock 3, Queen of South 2. Leading positions: 1, Dunfermline (P 19, Pts 26); 2, Dumbarton (P 19, Pts 25); 3, East Fife (P 19, Pts 22).

SECOND DIVISION: Arbroath 4, Queen's Park 1; Ayr 3, Raith 3; Cowdenbeath 1, Alloa0; St Johnstone 3, East Stirling 0; Stenhousemuir 0, Albion 0; Stirling 2, Berwick 2; Stranraer 2, Meadowbank 0. Leading positions: 1, Alloa (P 14, Pts 21); 2, Raith (P 14, Pts 21); 3, Meadowbank (P 14, Pts 18).

No relief for United's woes

Alan Dunn's DIARY

TWO English sporting establishments were put through the wringer last week and neither will ever be the same again after the experience. For Manchester United, one of the best-known names in the game of soccer for all their comparative ineffectiveness in the past couple of decades, it meant replacing their manager at a cost of more than £300,000. For Somerset County Cricket Club it meant a future without their three most famous players, West Indians Viv Richards and Joel Garner and England's leading all-rounder Ian Botham.

United's problems have been mounting all season, in total contrast to last year, when they won 13 and drew two of their opening 15 League games. They went on to lead the First Division for six months and seemed outright favourites to win their first league title since 1967, only to stumble in the closing straight. This season could hardly have started worse, with only three wins and four draws from their opening 14 matches. They lie third from bottom with 13 points, one more than their rivals, Manchester City, who have recently also gone through the trauma of changing managers.

Ron Atkinson, an engaging extrovert, had been United's manager since 1981, leading the club to win the FA Cup in 1983 and 1985 and never finishing lower than fourth in the Division One. For some clubs that would almost mean an offer of managership for life. United have different ambitions, based on a highly costly operation and consistently the highest attendances in British soccer. This season those gates, often around 50,000 in the good days, havebeen slipping, down to 36,000 for their last home league match and 10,000 fewer for their home tie against Southampton in the Littlewoods Cup. The return leg at Southampton last week saw United lose 4-1 — and Atkinson's fate was sealed.

Two days later Atkinson and his deputy were dismissed and Alex Ferguson, manager of Aberdeen, the Scottish Premier Division club, and his assistant had been named to take over. Atkinson had two years of his £60,000 a year contract to go while Aberdeen were believed to be receiving about £150,000 compensation from United for the loss of Ferguson. There will also be additional payment for the two assistants. Ferguson is believed to have signed a four year contract worth £400,000. In the search for a crowd-pulling and award-winning team United have never shied away from cost. Nor have they refused to pay highly for playing talent. During Atkinson's reign they have spent £7.4 million on players and have earned £5.3 million selling others.

Since Sir Matt Busby, who created the United legend during his 25 years as manager, retired in 1970 the club have had five other managers, Atkinson being the sixth. But Ferguson's reign began bleakly with yet another defeat 2-0 at Oxford United at the weekend. Oxford had their biggest gate of the season, 13,545, and Ferguson was left to ponder a future that includes a clutch of leading players nursing injuries.

☆ ☆ ☆

A FAILURE to make the most of their playing talent lies also at the root of the squabble at Somerset Cricket Club, which came to a head at the weekend. In spite of having the trio of Richards, now captain of the West Indies and long regarded as the most attractive and powerful stroke player in the world, Garner, one of the formidable pack of West Indian pace bowlers, and Botham,for some the most entertaining all rounder in the English game, Somerset have had a couple of lean years. Time, felt the management, for a change. So, eleven weeks ago they dismissed Richards and Garner having already pinned future hopes in the signing of a New Zealand Test player, Martin Crowe. Botham, whose career at Somerset began on the same day as Richards's, was horrified and said that if the decision was not reversed he would not play again for the county. At the weekend a lengthy and often acrimonious campaign to overthrow the decision ended in failure. By 1,828 votes to 796 a special general meeting of the club backed the management and Botham announced from Australia, where he is touring with the English squad, that he would not play again for the county. He advised the club captain, Peter Roebuck, not to proceed with his plan to fly out to Australia for a "straight talk" with Botham.

☆ ☆ ☆

WHEN Somerset's decision was being taken, Botham was taking part in a reaguard action by the English team to try to avoid defeat in their last major match before the first Test against Australia in Brisbane. England's batting problems were compounded in the match at Perth against Western Australia where Gower was twice out for a duck, Slack, the original choice as Test opener, had only 15 and a duck, and the captain, Gatting, hardly better with 19 and a duck. Marsh, on the other hand, had shown excellent opening form for Australia, with 124 in the first innings and in the second. Western Australia had scored 275 and 207 for eight, leaving England, 152 in the first innings, a target of 331 to win. The match ended in a draw with England 153-6; Lamb scoring 63 and Botham 40 not out.

☆ ☆ ☆

BACK HOME British representation in the European club soccer competitions was reduced to two after the second leg matches in the second rounds. Dundee United and Glasgow Rangers survive in the UEFA Cup, but Glasgow Celtic and Wrexham were knocked out of the European Cup and Cupwinners' Cup respectively. Celtic had played bravely in the away leg of their tie at Dynamo Kiev before a 100,000 crowd, but having achieved equality over the two legs they conceded two goals in the final 18 minutes to lose the match 3-1 and the tie 4-2 on aggregate. Wrexham had been hopeful of advancing further after holding Real Zaragosa to a goalless match away. But in the home leg they finished 2-2 after extra time and Real went through on the rule that makes away goals worth double in the event of a tie. Rangers, meanwhile, went through by winning 1-0 at Boavista for an aggregate of 3-1, while Dundee United went through by a similar aggregate in spite of losing the second leg at Universitatea Craiova 1-0. In the third round Rangers have drawn Borussia Moenchengladbach, while Dundee United meet Hadjuk Split.

But both teams were given a rude awakening in the Scottish Premier Division at the weekend, both losing at home. United were beaten 3-0 by their city neighbours, Dundee, while Rangers fell 1-0 to Motherwell. Celtic, winning 2-1 at Hamilton Academicals, thus took a two points lead over Dundee United at the top of the division with a game in hand.

In England the champions, Liverpool, returned to the head of the First Division thanks to a fine 3-1 win on the plastic surface at Queen's Park Rangers, a surface they are known to dislike. Liverpool lead the division on goals scored from Nottingham Forest, who were beaten 1-0 at Coventry City, who are having one of their better seasons.

☆ ☆ ☆

WORLD RUGBY UNION leaders have called on the chairman of the South African Rugby Board, Danie Craven, to halt plans for rebel tours there next season that could lead to a major split in the game. Dr Craven has admitted knowledge of the attempts being made in South Africa to bring over teams from Britain and Australia next summer.

☆ ☆ ☆

BOXING'S Herol Graham moved nearer to a world title fight last week when he retained his European middleweight title by forcing Mark Kaylor to retire with a cut eye in the eighth round of their fight at Wembley, London.

☆ ☆ ☆

JOHN McENROE was more like his old playing self, without the on-court petulance, in winning the £145,000 first prize of the European Community Championship lawn tennis title in Antwerp at the weekend by 6-3, 1-6, 7-6, 5-7, 6-2 against Czechoslovakia's Miloslav Mecir.

RUGBY UNION: David Frost in Toulouse: France 7, New Zealand 19

All Blacks' dour warning for World Cup

NEW ZEALAND'S hard-fought victory over France in Toulouse on Saturday was a demonstration of vigour and commitment to the cause, but its lack of invention and creativity was a solemn warning to those who hope to witness fluent running rugby from the top teams in next year's World Cup.

The All Blacks recently learned a bitter lesson when the Wallabies, forsaking their free-running style, played 10-man rugby and won their third Test in New Zealand, and with it the series. On Saturday the All Blacks showed that they had been digesting the lesson ever since.

They attacked mainly with tight moves involving their loose forwards and scrum half or with high punts from standoff.

It was largely a forward battle fought out in a dour and sour atmosphere on a dry and warm afternoon. It was trench warfare in a jet age. The only try the All Blacks managed to score came from Shelford picking up the ball at the back of a scrum and plunging through.

The French forwards battled bravely, and Sella scored a handsome try when the forwards peeled round the back of a lineout and the backs exploited the broken field. The French clearly pinned most of their faith in such moves, expecting to win plenty of lineout possession through their anticipated advantage in height at the back of the line. French thrusts — begun by Duboka from the scrum half position, were frustrated by the All Blacks' stationing one of their locks at the back of the line for French throws.

One beautiful cut-through by Benneval and the occasional audacious exploit by Blanco served to show what might have been. Blanco, however, was far from infallible, a horribly miskicked clearance by him giving Crowley the opportunity to open the scoring for the All Blacks with a dropped goal from close to the centre spot. Stone also dropped a goal, after stooping to retrieve a poor pass.

A long penalty goal by Berot left the All Blacks leading 6-3 at the interval. Sella's try put the French ahead at 7-6 but the All Blacks ground their way remorselessly back with Shelford's try and three penalty goals by Crowley.

Blanco was not the only player who made unwanted mistakes. The All Blacks coach, Brian Lochore, reckoned afterwards the New Zealanders had thrown away three tries.

FRANCE: S. Blanco (Biarritz); P. Berot (Agen), P. Sella (Agen), E. Benneval (Toulouse), M. Andrieu (TNimes); J. P. Lescarboura (Dax) (sub F. Mesnel, Racing), P. Berbizier (Agen); J. P. Garuel (Lourdes), D. Dubroca (Agen, capt) P. Chabowski (Bourgoin), A Lorieux (Aix), A. Condom (Biarritz), E. Champ (Toulon), A. Carminati (Beziers), (sub D. Erbani, Agen), L. Rodriguez (Montferrand).

ALL BLACKS: K. Crowley; K. Kirwan, J. Stanley, A. Stone, C. Green; F. Botica, D. Kirk; S. McDowell, S. Fitzpatrick, J. Drake, G. Whetton, M. Pierce, J. Hobbs (capt), W. Shelford; M. Brewer.

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THE GUARDIAN WEEKLY
The Washington Post

Vol. 135 No. 21 Week ending November 23, 1986

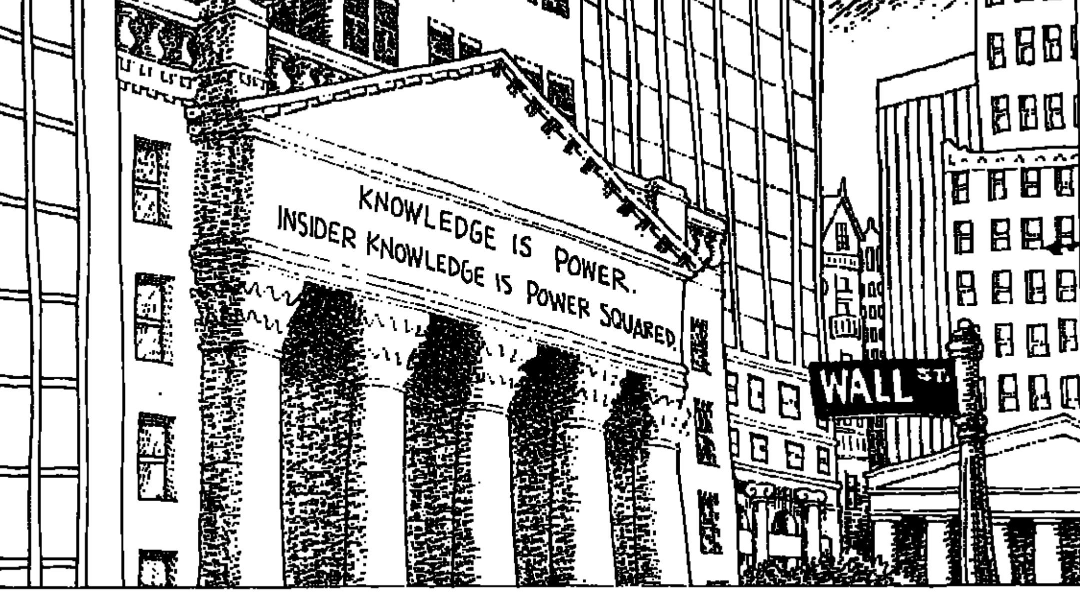
Market hit by insider dealing scandals

By Mark Milner and Alex Brummer in Washington

BRITISH Opposition MPs this week demanded tough measures to combat financial fraud in the City as revelations about insider dealing hit London share prices and brought takeover activity on Wall Street to a virtual halt. In Washington the Securities and Exchange Commission moved swiftly to widen its investigations into the affairs of Mr Ivan Boesky to include at least 10 investment houses, law firms, and investors.

And in London, the corporate affairs minister, Mr Michael Howard, forecast an increase in criminal prosecutions for insider dealings as he responded to emergency questions raised after the resignation of Mr Geoffrey Collier as a director of Morgan Grenfell Securities, part of the merchant banking group. Inspectors from the Department of Trade and Industry are investigating allegations of insider dealing by Mr Collier, who resigned last week after admitting to breaching the firm's rules on personal share dealing (James Lewis, page 3).

Mr Boesky, the Wall Street wheeler-dealer, was caught by the SEC, which has the kind of wide statutory powers, which the Labour Party believes should control the city. At the weekend Mr Boesky was fined $100 million, banned from share dealing for life, and may now face a prison sentence for his part in insider trading scandals. He had 300 phone buttons on his desk and a huge network of contacts. He is still worth an estimated $200 million. He has played a key role in corporate raiding and mege-mergers for more than 10 years and his trading companies have assets of over $2 billion. (Profile, p6, Comment, p10).



The pressures on the President

PRESIDENT REAGAN'S television broadcast last week failed to convince most Americans of the wisdom of sending arms to Iran — 72 per cent disapproved of it if it were intended to improve relations, 79 if it were intended to help to free American hostages. Terry Waite, the Anglican church envoy who has negotiated the release of hostages in Lebanon, said on Monday the rumour and speculation about arms shipments had done immense harm to his efforts. Many of his contacts in Lebanon had now gone to ground and might not surface again. "We know, no matter what is said in the press, that neither Iran nor Syria nor other nations have direct influence over the actons of the hostage-takers . . . You can't identify in the release of hostages any one factor."

Mr Reagan said on Monday that he had "absolutely no plans" to send more weapons and "I'm not firing anyone," an apparent defence of his Chief-of-Staff, Mr Donald Regan, and his National Security Adviser, Admiral John Poindexter, who have both received heavy criticism for their roles in the affair. Speculation persisted that the Secretary of State, Mr George Shultz, would resign. In a television interview on Sunday he made plain his opposition to White House policy. Where Mr Reagan had said "There has been no evidence of Iranian government complicity in acts of terrorism against the United States," Mr Shultz said "Iran has and continues to pursue a policy of terrorism". A senior White House official said: "We were miffed that Shultz could not have been more supportive."

Reports, pages 7, 15

COMMENT

IT IS ALL a question, really, of how you feel about official lies and official hypocrisy. If you expect elderly statesmen — like the President of the United States — to tell an approximation to the truth, to abide by the laws of his land, and not to ask his allies to follow a difficult path that he, himself, covertly eschews, then you may be outraged and sickened by Ronald Reagan's Iranian imbroglio. If, on the other hand, you expect the President of the United States to tell international fibs under pressure, and to behave in the most contorted ways — and there is infinite cynicism to the word *expect* — then outrage and nausea can be much overdone.

Let us try the cynicism-stained path of diminished expectations first, for Mr Reagan has some solid mitigation to plead. He has hostages still buried away in Beirut, human lives at stake. It is perfectly honourable to set high personal stall by their release. These are human issues of great potential pain and seriousness. But you're also leader of a country whose interests, in the real world, aren't perhaps best served by the public facade of chill enmity towards supposedly pariah states like Iran. You have an interest in the future of the Gulf after the ancient Ayatollah dies. You have an interest in planting a few hooks for the future. You may even have a (human) interest in trying to call a premature halt to the horrendous bloodshed of the Iran-Iraq war. So windows of opportunity with Iranian leadership factions open over time. Mr McFarlane, Admiral Poindexter, and Colonel North —

Continued on page 10

It's not Shultz who should go

CONSIDER the crumpled George Shultz. He is the Secretary of State—at least, he was on Tuesday. The vicar of American foreign policy. But no-one really told him (or Caspar Weinberger, or even the Joint Chiefs of Staff) about Iran. The glum word Mr Shultz uses in public is "fragmentary" knowledge. Does he approve of what has happened? No. Would he go on fishing with arms in troubled Gulf waters? No. Can he (lethal question) speak for the Reagan administration? "No."

The spectacle of a traduced and miserable Secretary of State is, of course, nothing new. Remember how NSC overlord Henry Kissinger disposed of Mr William Rogers, neglecting to cut him in on the grand rapprochment with China? Remember the resigning Cyrus Vance; or even the fulminating Alexander Haig? The tension between State and the National Security Council is systemic (and endemic). American foreign policy is not made by binding Cabinet decision. It emerges from deliberately designed warfare between feudal barons. The war of the President's ear.

But even by the rules of that war, the affair of the Iranian overtures is pretty jolting. George Shultz wasn't merely kept in the dark. He was wheeled around the world to berate European states for softness on terrorism; and, plaintively, to tell the Arab League that America was not (repeat not) helping Iran against Iraq. His President didn't just let him down; he condoned the destruction of much of Mr Shultz's credibility. So now the Secretary is very unhappy. He may, or may not, resign. But the wonder of the American way is why anyone should point a resigning finger at Mr Shultz. It was the NSC who organised the bungled opening to Tehran. It is Admiral Poindexter who admits a "miscalculation". If anyone should fall from grace and public life in this crisis, it should be the miscalculating Admiral. That, on one level, would be simple justice. But in the long and futile history of conflict between the State Department and the National Security Council, it would also be highly salutory, for once, to see the shadowy man at the NSC carrying the can.

The Washington Post

Making It Worse

IMAGINE President Reagan saying: I felt a profound obligation to the hostages. For this reason, I reluctantly released to Iran militarily insignificant amounts of defensive arms, though this cut across both my pledge not to negotiate with terrorists and the American interest in containing Iranian fundamentalism. Something did come out of it — the release of three hostages, Iranian cooperation in a few other hostage affairs. Crazily enough, something more may yet come out of it. That is why, despite the embarrassment, I am trying to keep open a line to Tehran.

Had Mr. Reagan said something along these lines in his television address last week, he might have preserved a measure of credibility concerning this bizarre affair and also a measure of understanding. For few Americans are not susceptible to an appeal in the name of the safety of their fellow citizens. It would not have been the worst thing he could do.

What the president did, however, came close to being the worst thing he could do. He presented an incomplete and implausible version of events in which he conceded not the slightest inconsistency, misjudgment or lapse of execution and left far more questions hanging than he put to rest. He came forward not as a resolute president with an honorable purpose prepared to take his knocks, but as a whistling-in-the-dark chief executive who set himself and the country up for manipulation and humiliation and who still cannot see where he went wrong.

The president should have been alert to opportunities for conciliation with Iran, but he should also have recognized the roughness of the political terrain and not put a vision of a diplomatic breakthrough over his responsibility to keep the confidence of Arab moderates and European allies. He should not have left the painful impression of conducting a policy out of the hearing even of his own questioning lieutenants. He should not have accepted the mind-boggling suggestion, which, it seems, did not come from the Iranians, that there was a requirement to establish his good faith, by sending arms. For it is the arms transfers, even if they were only in the limited amounts so far acknowledged, that are the most unconscionable feature of this affair.

Perhaps some unforeseen benefit will come along and transform it. Until that happens, it stands as a monument — and not the first — to the perils of closet policy-making. Mr. Reagan let a good human instinct be clouded by bad political judgment. The result so far has been a multidimensional policy disaster that is made worse by his obstinate refusal to grant that he goofed.

Don't 'sneer' at SDI

Edward Teller once observed that SDI opponents mount three main criticisms of the program:

1) It won't work and will waste a lot of money.

2) It will work all too well and will force the USSR into desperate adventures.

3) Both of the above.

E. P. Thompson and Keith Puttick (November 2) seem to be firm supporters of Option 3.

There are several points which these gentlemen have not addressed in their letters. First, there seems to be little question that the individual components of the SDI could "work" — that is, could destroy enemy missiles in flight. Professor Puttick's assertion that "the Soviet Union could easily swamp any defensive system at present in prospect . . ." is just that — an assertion. Whether or not the marginal cost of defending against additional missiles exceeds the cost of the additional missiles and countermeasures and whether system hardware and software can be made sufficiently reliable are legitimate questions to be resolved by the extensive research required before an effective strategic defence system can be designed.

Secondly, the fact that the Soviet Union is orchestrating a frenzied public campaign against "Star Wars" while pursuing the elaborate research program described by David Whitehouse is very disquieting. If the Soviet Union comes to possess what it believes to be an effective SDI system unmatched by the West, the actual capabilities of such a system will be of little significance. The effects on Soviet behaviour could be dangerous and far-reaching.

Thirdly, the attraction to Messrs. Thompson and Puttick of a 50 per cent or even a 90 per cent reduction in superpower strategic arsenals is understandable, but it is hard to see how such a reduction would have more than symbolic value in the absence of strategic defence. Disarmament lobbyists never tire of reminding us of the vast overkill capacities possessed by the USA and USSR. Huge percentage reductions in strategic weapons would still leave both sides with enough warheads to destroy each other along with their allies and perhaps everyone else.

Finally, SDI opponents seem determined to portray pro-SDI scientists and laymen either as ignorant boobs who cannot see the obvious impossibility of strategic defence or as cynical careerists who find it a cornucopia of high-paying jobs and research grants. If Messrs. Thompson and Puttick were asked whether they classify themselves as Soviet dupes or as conscious Soviet agents of influence, they *would be justifiably* outraged. Recognition of the possibility of honest disagreement over a complex issue would be more fitting than an air of sneering moral superiority, but few observers expect this sort of civility from the "peace" movement.

Robert M. Kelley,
Dhahran, Saudi Arabia.

Tears for fears

It is encouraging to find a serious French journalist (Andre Fontaine, "No tears at the Elysee over Reykjavik failure", Nov. 2) concluding that the process of nuclear disarmament is long overdue; but his strictures of course are only for the US and the Soviet Union.

He *states without comment*, or presumably criticism, that the present French and British Governments both wish to update their present deterrents to make them credible. Yet, later, the prospect of a British Labour Party "now fallen victim to the delusion of unilateral nuclear disarmament" coming to power, is talked of in terms of "threat" and "risk". He does not specify why it should be a delusion for a small European country to attempt to change its Nato contribution from a nuclear to a conventional one.

Surely the reason for French agitation over a possible reversal of British policy on nuclear weapons is because the spotlight would then be turned on a France following perhaps her own delusion of an independent nuclear deterrent?

Doreen Marsden,
Lower Neadon Cottage,
Bridford,
Devon.

Better read than red

The Education Minister, Kenneth Baker, suggests that children should "read and understand Animal Farm by the age of 12". What can he be thinking of?

While *it* is true that even an intelligent eight-year-old could read the words of Animal Farm, could a 12-year-old understand that Snowball is *really Trotsky?* But perhaps Mr Baker is thinking of introducing compulsory courses in Marxist-Leninism.

Similarly, David Copperfield would seem to enshrine the pet hates of his Cabinet colleagues. The early part of the story deals with the misfortunes of a single parent; unmarried cohabitees squatting in an upturned boat; and a young hero who rejects a YTS course in the wine business, provided by kind Mr Murdstone. Are these the role-models 15-year-olds should be imitating?

But perhaps John Mortimer's Paradise Postponed, with its clear advice on how to become a Tory cabinet minister, should be included on every English syllabus.

John Purkis,
Highworth Avenue,
Cambridge.

Pipe dream

You refer (October 10) to the SDI as "unworkable", and a "pipe dream". Why then, are the Soviets so anxious to stop it?

Tom Oleson,
Via Italo Piccagli,
Rome.

Men who mean business

I have top secret information from the Kremlin and the White House regarding their activities for the next few weeks: —

1. CIA to hide Russian ambassador's spare tyre and then let his tyres down whilst out of town.

2. In reprisal, KGB to seriously weaken seams on US ambassador's trousers before important public engagement.

3. In reprisal, George Shultz to call in Soviet ambassador to issue complaint, but meanwhile CIA office boy climbs under ambassador's chair and ties his shoelaces together.

4. In reprisal, KGB to put black shoe polish on all US embassy toilet seats.

5. In reprisal, CIA to deposit banana skins on Russian ambassador's doorstep, ring bell and run away, etc. etc.

All these tactics *are designed to* show the allies firmness of resolve and that "we really mean business" with regard to the arms limitation talks.

And if you believe that, may the Lord help you.

Dr. Alan Hargreave,
Casilla 3048,
Santa Cruz, Bolivia.

Shades of a phoney war on Aids

The Government's initiative on Aids, while welcome, is too little, too late. Without any costings attached, it is still unclear how seriously the Government is taking this scourge.

After four years of inaction, the DHSS finally allocated a paltry £1.89 million, then topped this up with a trifling £6.3 million last December. As a proportion of the total NHS budget, this is precisely 0.04 per cent: a ridiculous amount for what people throughout the West see as the biggest threat to health this century.

There are now estimated to be some 40,000 positive carriers in Britain today; that number is expected to rise exponentially to about one million by 1990, with perhaps 18,000 Aids victims by that date, a 70-fold increase in just four years. Since health economists in Britain believe that the care of each Aids patient, including all related public expenditure, costs £10,000 to £20,000, the total could well rise sharply in the next few years to some £180 million to £360 million.

I would estimate that expenditure of some £50 million to £100 million *over next year would be* needed to secure maximum cost-benefit, and to give the following options:

An explicit and persisting health education programme for everyone, not just those in the high-risk categories. A programme of hard-hitting TV commercials is needed; overmoralistic caution will simply be counter-productive.

Since contraceptive sheaths are probably the best protection against transmission of the virus, they should be made freely available from doctors and clinics. Since infected needles are another major source of transmission, free needles and syringes should be made available;

Screening should be widely and freely available for those who wish to use it. Sexually transmitted disease clinics are ideally suited to retain confidentiality, providing free walk-in services which do not require referral and guarantee anonymity;

Special emphasis needs urgently to be given to a campaign aimed at students and school-leavers to ensure that everyone in this age range is made fully aware of the risks;

This requires a substantial investment in these services.

Michael Meacher, MP,
(Lab, Oldham W),
House of Commons.

Misleading influences

I learn from the BBC news that Mr. Norman Tebbit has publicly castigated the BBC for having been influenced, in its one-sided reporting of the Libyan bombing last April, by "Libyan propaganda".

It is proper that Mr. Tebbit should thus identify a notorious bias often shown by the BBC towards giving undue weight to *the prejudiced version of events* normally put out by a small country which has been attacked by a large one. One has only to recall the way in which the BBC was misled by Czech propaganda in 1939 and in 1968, despite the reasoned explanations for the German and Russian attacks respectively put out by Berlin and Moscow at the time.

This latest lapse is particularly regrettable after it seemed, from the BBC's reporting of the Falklands and Grenada conflicts, that it had seen the error of its ways.

P. G. Haig,
Glenmore Street,
Wellington, NZ.

May I pre-empt Conservative Central Office and suggest that to counter the "red" triangle a small bust of Mr Norman Tebbit be affixed to the top left hand corner of our screens during programmes requiring appropriate discretion.

Chris Saville,
London SW17.

Hero from the Spanish war

At least one notable exception comes to mind in the face of Jane Walker's blanket assertion that not a single volunteer who fought in the Spanish Civil War became an officer in the American forces in the second world war (October 26), and that was Herman Bottcher: one of the second world war's few authentic heroes. As a sergeant with the 32nd Division, he was commissioned a captain in the field for the role he played in leading his detachment in cutting *off the Japanese* at Buna and for holding open a critical corridor for reinforcements in spite of repeated counter-attacks. I have the impression that he was a major before he was killed at a later stage in the war.

Holman Jenkins,
Dartmouth Ave,
Swarthmore, Pa.

Tory morality

We can never accuse the Tory Party of not telling the truth. It claims to be the citadel of Victorian morality, and indeed it is. The impeccable exterior remains, as does the clumsy handling of matters of passion.

The dutiful wife, the loyal children still link hands to protect the Victorian facade. *Long live Victorian morality!* Tory gentlemen, please do not move one inch from the old ways — you keep them so well. Awfully unromantic for the wife, of course, but frightfully Victorian.

Jan Marjoribanks,
Moleworth St,
Nth Adelaide.

No-frills living for the clergy

Re: Rev. Hill-Tout's "Wages of Virtue" letter (September 28);

Fascinating to hear a complaint about a pay rise from anyone these days. Such rectitude! As an Anglican priest in Canada, at the lowest pay scale, I get about the same stipend (C$15,050), *a house*, car allowance and interest-free car loan, dental and group insurance, pension plan, and tenure that a professor might envy. Sounds OK, doesn't it?

Yet there are problems. Moonlighting is common; few clergy families get by without a spouse's part-time job; isolated clergy in the north subsidise (beyond tithing) their parishes out of their own pockets. As for "credibility and integrity amongst the poor", the pay and benefits package is at least lower middle class.

No doubt some of the truly poor would gladly trade their status for such a plain but adequate living. I reverently agree that the church ought not to attract those seeking a sinecure rather than a true vocation, but among parsimonious parishes and dioceses we are not in danger of creating a new class of wealthy theocrats. Quite the opposite, since so many well-off Anglicans give so poorly or not at all to the church they call theirs.

Do they like to keep their clergy poor, as "designated Christians", so that they can suffer through *them vicariously? The* guilt-driven non-attender often pays in big to have the rites of passage attended to, but fails to find the lasting satisfaction of a regular commitment. We treat our clergy like we treat our artists.

(Rev) Kim Salo,
Swan River, Manitoba.

THE GUARDIAN WEEKLY

November 23, 1986 Vol. 135 No. 21

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Letters to the Editor and other editorial correspondence to: The Guardian Weekly, PO Box 19, Cheadle, Cheshire, SK8 1DD, England.

Subscription enquiries to the Circulation Manager, The Guardian Weekly, 164 Deansgate, Manchester, M60 2RR, England.

Advertisement enquiries to the Advertisement Manager, The Guardian Weekly, 119 Farringdon Road, London, England.

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PM's appeal to 'popular capitalism'

by James Lewis

THE QUEEN'S speech, the traditional opening to a new parliamentary year, was seen less as a legislative programme than as the opening of the Prime Minister's campaign for a third term of office. There is nothing in Mrs Thatcher's programme that cannot be quietly dropped if the urge to go to the country — possibly next summer — becomes irresistible.

The main item on the agenda will be a new Criminal Justice Bill — a sure-fire winner with Tory supporters — which will allow the courts to confiscate the profits of serious crime and enable the attorney general to appeal against what seem to be lenient sentences. The only other controversial proposal is a Bill to replace the rating system in Scotland with a poll tax. England is promised — or threatened with — a similar reform only if the Conservatives win a general election.

The remainder of the programme consists of minor — and mostly predictable — measures. Local councils will be required to privatise more services. The legal disadvantages of illegitimacy will be removed. Safety measures at sports grounds will be strengthened. The promised Channel tunnel will be given parliamentary sanction.

Such an agenda will allow the Government to convey an impression of competent inactivity and to concentrate on what Mrs Thatcher sees as the main election issues: the virtues of "popular capitalism" and the weakness of Labour's unilateralist defence policy which, she said, would produce a "fearful, fellow-travelling Britain."

Labour, for its part, will concentrate on the economy and poverty. The party leader, Mr Neil Kinnock, said that two million people were condemned to a "jumble-sale Christmas" this year. A country in which so many were sorely and helplessly poor was a country divided, lacking in basic justice, and not at peace with itself.

The voters in the Merseyside constituency of Knowsley North, one of the poorest in the country, did not offer Mr Kinnock much encouragement. Labour maintained its seat there at a byelection last week, but with a majority reduced to 6,724 compared with more than 17,000 three years ago.

"Would you like to come up for a commercial on Aids?"

The decline of 8.2 per cent in its share of the vote was its biggest fall in any byelection of this parliament. The Tory share fell by a staggering 13.8 per cent. The victory, if not the seat, went to the Liberals, whose share rose by nearly 20 per cent.

Given the special circumstances of Knowsley — a local Labour Party at odds with itself, and an electorate with particularly strong reasons for hating the Tories — there were no particularly valid lessons to be drawn from the result except, perhaps, that the Liberal-SDP Alliance continues to perform better in real elections than it does in the opinion polls.

The aura of an economy being geared up for a general election was heightened by figures showing a fall of nearly 76,000 in unemployment, a spurt in manufacturing production, and a continuing sharp rise in incomes. The fall in unemployment was the biggest since May, 1983, which was the month before the last general election, and reduces the dole queue to 3.2 million. The statistics, however, conceal the fact that more than half a million people are only kept out of the queue by short-term job-creation programmes, and that many thousands more have been excluded by changes in the method of counting.

A "forceful" new propaganda campaign to alert the public to the risks of Aids was approved at the first meeting of a special Cabinet committee set up to try to combat the disease. Some 23 million leaflets will be sent to every household in the country, backed by newspaper advertisements, a poster campaign and public service advertising on television.

The trouble for the Government is that public opinion, while favouring stronger action against Aids, would probably frown on measures suggested by the medical profession such as the free issue of condoms and of injection needles for drug-users. A lifting of the television ban on condom advertising would also be regarded by many voters as an encouragement of promiscuity. The leaflet campaign is therefore probably designed to condition public opinion for sterner measures that may have to be taken later.

Two Government-appointed inspectors, armed with new legal powers, began an interrogation of Mr Geoffrey Collier, the disgraced former head of securities at the Morgan Grenfell merchant bank. In the City's first scandal since the so-called "Big Bang" two weeks ago, Mr Collier resigned from the bank after admitting breaking its own house rules on personal share dealing, though he denied using inside information, gained at the bank, to make a swift profit on shares he knew were about to rise.

Until two weeks ago the Stock Exchange had its own regulations to prevent "insider" dealing. Since the Big Bang, however, the banks have been left to regulate themselves. The detection of Mr Collier's alleged offences may well have been a triumph for self-regulation. But the Trade and Industry Secretary, Mr Paul Channon, took the precaution of arming inspectors with new powers which could land Mr Collier in contempt of court if he fails to cooperate in their investigations.

The first anniversary of the signing of the Anglo-Irish Agreement, designed to bring about closer cooperation between the London and Dublin governments, was marked by violent protests in Belfast, during which police fired plastic bullets at an attacking Unionist mob.

Hundreds of families, mostly Catholics, have been intimidated out of their homes since the historic signing of the agreement twelve months ago. New-style Protestant paramilitary groups have emerged on to the streets of Northern Ireland. The accord has, however, survived the worst efforts of extremists on both sides to destroy it, though the pace of reform has been painfully slow. Supporters of the pact have been particularly aggrieved that the single-judge Diplock courts for dealing with terrorist cases have not been replaced by the promised three-judge system.

Lack of progress may well be due to the fact that the Irish Republic will soon face an election which the present Prime Minister, Dr Garret FitzGerald, could lose. It could equally well be true that the strength of Unionist opposition has diminished Mrs Thatcher's early enthusiasm for the agreement.

42 killed by 'carelessness'

THE driver of the coach which ran into a traffic queue on the M6 in Lancashire last year, killing 13 people and injuring 42, was acquitted this week of causing death by reckless driving.

But John Bonnyman, aged 63, of Edinburgh, was found guilty of driving without due care and attention at Preston Crown Court. He was fined £200 and disqualified from driving for three years.

The jury convicted him by a 10-2 majority after deliberating for almost 3½ hours. The judge, Mr Justice Macpherson, ordered costs to be paid from central funds.

The accident happened near roadworks at Barton, north of Preston, on October 21 last year. Mr Bonnyman, a driver for 30 years with a clean record, was taking an Eastern Scottish coach from Edinburgh to London when he ran into stationary traffic.

FOREIGN EXCHANGES

	Sterling Rates November 17	Previous Closing Rates
Australia	2.2175-2.2250	2.2083-2.2123
Austria	20.24-20.27	20.22-20.25
Belgium	59.69-59.80	59.67-59.80
Canada	1.9778-1.9806	1.9763-1.9798
Denmark	10.84-10.85	10.83-10.85
France	9.41-9.42	9.37-9.40
Germany	2.873-2.878	2.862-2.867
Hong Kong	11.124-11.125	11.12-11.13
Ireland	1.0537-1.0547	1.0515-1.0525
Italy	1,987-1,993	1,981-1,987
Japan	232.48-232.86	230.77-231.23
Netherlands	2.246-3.248	3.232-3.238
Norway	10.71-10.72	10.67-10.71
Portugal	211.77-212.64	211.70-212.64
Spain	193.28-193.58	192.78-193.12
Sweden	9.90-9.92	9.88-9.89
Switzerland	2.38-2.39	2.373-2.378
USA	1.4280-1.4290	1.4290-1.4300
ECU	1.3787-1.3805	1.3763-1.3780

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Prison officers may sue over 'riot incitement' claims

By Andrew Moncur and Alan Travis

THE Prison Officers Association said it may sue for libel over a report alleging that a few officers incited outbreaks of rioting and arson in Britain's worst eruption of gaol unrest.

The POA challenged the authors of the report, the Prison Reform Trust, to hand over any evidence to the police for investigation.

The report details the accounts of six unnamed prisoners in four of the gaols where rioting, in April, coincided with an overtime ban imposed by prison officers in their dispute over manning levels.

In one case, at Northeye low security prison near Lewes, Sussex — which was wrecked by fire — an inmate reportedly was told that an officer said: "There's only four of us on tonight so you can cause a bit of havoc in the camp."

Another prisoner, at Wymott youth custody centre, Preston, Lancashire, claimed that officers had made remarks like "Do a good job tonight, lads" and "Do us proud, lads."

Mr John Bartell, the chairman of the POA, said: "We have talked to our lawyers about the possibility of redress. They have looked at particular areas where they feel that a small group of staff are identified and it may be possible to take out a libel action."

Mr Stephen Shaw, the director of the trust, said that Home Office industrial relations tactics had relied upon brinkmanship, "upon calling the prison officers' bluff."

He added: "Shamefully, a few rogue prison officers took up that challenge and condoned and incited the worst-ever series of prison riots in our history."

Inmates at Peterhead gaol in Aberdeen will be able to make complaints implying criminal conduct by prison staff by writing letters in sealed envelopes to the police or procurator fiscal, it was announced in the Commons. There is to be an inquiry into prisoners' grievances about conditions and treatment — which started last week after a siege in which a prison officers was held hostage.

King counteracts prince's 'snub'

CROWN Prince Abdullah of Saudi Arabia, who allegedly left his country during the visit of the Prince and Princess of Wales for health reasons, is enjoying the company of a group of "lady entertainers" in a five-star hotel on the Canary Islands.

His place as host in Saudi Arabia was taken by King Fahd who installed the royal couple in his brand-new guest house, the Nakheel palace (palace of the palm trees).

The prince has taken a block of 40 rooms, including the luxury royal suite, in the Santa Catalina hotel on the outskirts of Las Palmas. A hotel spokesman said that his booking, made on Thursday by the Saudi royal household, has come as a complete surprise.

Since Crown Prince Abdullah is the government's link-man with Syria and has a Syrian wife, there was speculation in Riyadh that his absence was a calculated snub. Buckingham Palace officials initially expected him to be replaced by another prince in the line of succession, but King Fahd's decision to step in personally saved the day.

"It's a rather impressive gesture by the King," Mr Stephen Day, head of the Foreign Office Middle East department, said. "It's an Arab tradition of hospitality which was not anticipated but which is very welcome."

Michael Croft

MICHAEL CROFT, director of the National Youth Theatre for 30 years, has died at the age of 64. Mr Croft, a schoolteacher, was one of the most influential and under-rewarded talents in British theatre. He ran the National Youth Theatre single handed in the face of every kind of crisis.

Cool response to offer by Argentina

ARGENTINA this week said that it was ready to formally end hostilities with Britain if London drops its 150-mile "protection zone" around the Falklands.

But President Alfonsin's conditional offer is likely to be dismissed by Mrs Thatcher as an attempt by Argentina to entrap Britain into negotiations about the islands' sovereignty.

The Argentine offer came as part of a proposal to engage in "open dialogue" as a preliminary to substantive negotiations with Britain. The British Government is now studying the proposal.

The new proposal was announced in Buenos Aires. It coincides with President Alfonsin's visit to Washington, and comes a week before the annual Falklands debate in the UN General Assembly.

Britain has justified the protection zone as a conservation measure, but is widely interpreted as a deliberate move to maintain the political gulf between Britain and Argentina on the Falklands.

Last week, the US joined other members of the Organisation of American States in a resolution censuring the British move to control the fisheries around the Falklands as an aggravation of the sovereignty issue. *(See page 5.)*

By Hella Pick and Jeremy Morgan in Buenos Aires

The Prime Minister, speaking in Washington after her meeting with President Reagan, again declared: "We do not discuss the sovereignty of the Falklands; we will not discuss it; and we do not recognise that there is a problem about the sovereignty of the Falklands."

The new proposal says that Argentina would be willing to end the state of hostilities with Britain in exchange for "global negotiations" on the Falklands dispute.

Argentina was willing "to begin overall negotiations with the UK" under the terms of existing UN resolutions, which call for talks on all aspects of the dispute. Even though there is no mention of sovereignty in the UN resolution, Britain has always rejected the formulation on the grounds that the resolution implies a British willingness to negotiate the Falklands' status.

Now, Argentina is proposing a preliminary period for "previous and preparatory steps" during which there should be "an open dialogue" with Britain, "to create the conditions of trust necessary to successfully face the negotiations and set a timetable for them."

Talks and later negotiations were aimed at "resolving all the problems that exist between both parties, as well as the sovereignty dispute". Argentina's proposal mentions trade, consular and diplomatic relations, transport and communications, and the conservation and preservation of fishing resources in the region.

Until now, the Alfonsin Government had followed the principle of its military predecessors, that the June, 1982, surrender of Argentine troops in the Falklands meant that a battle was lost, but not the war. The government had always argued that it was not obliged to declare an end to hostilities because the war was never declared in the first place.

Mrs Thatcher, however, is unlikely to be impressed by such gestures unless they are accompanied by a firm commitment to set aside the sovereignty issue.

Mrs Thatcher brings Reagan down to earth

MRS THATCHER returned to London well satisfied that her weekend dash to Camp David had successfully brought President Reagan's nuclear weapons policies down to earth again, and secured his endorsement for a set of arms-control priorities more realistically tailored to European anxieties and her own election timetable.

In effect, she has extracted from her senior ally a promise that he will end his flirtation with the campaign for nuclear disarmament at the Iceland summit which threatened to undermine the Government's defence posture in an election year and put the British Trident missile purchase in doubt.

As with the December, 1984, Camp David agreement on defining the purpose of Star Wars research, the Prime Minister may well have pulled the Nato fat out of a fire started by an Administration overfond of playing with matches.

"Nuclear weapons cannot be dealt with in isolation, given the need for stable overall balance at all times," the two leaders agreed in a statement hammered out from a British draft.

It explicitly confirmed that no drastic cuts will be made in the nuclear balance of terror without first ensuring that Western Europe is not left facing Soviet superiority in convenitonal weapons.

The agreement is to be conveyed to Mr Gorbachev — in response to his own message of last week — by Britain's ambassador to Moscow, Sir Brian Cartledge.

After a helicopter ride from Washington on Saturday morning, Mrs Thatcher was greeted with a kiss by Mr Reagan, and driven off to a lodge in an electric golf cart over which he appeared to have only erratic control. Despite the ominous symbolism of this start, a senior US official later declared: "These are two leaders who consult often and deeply, who share ideas, and their whole session . . . had that warmth to it, and an informality to it."

After a whirlwind round of talks with senior administration officials, and with the President himself, at his official retreat in the Maryland hills, the Prime Minister appeared at the British embassy bearing a "small statement" which contained most of what she appeared to have wanted from the latest manifestation of the Ron and Maggie special relationship — which left them chatting alone for almost an hour on Saturday.

The modest price Mrs Thatcher seemed happy to pay was that she managed to refrain from any hint of criticism of her friend — most conspicuously over the Iran arms deal fiasco.

Having discussed the issue with both Vice-President George Bush

By Michael White in Washington

over breakfast and with the President himself, the Prime Minister stoically refused to detect any differences between them. "I believe implicitly in the President's total integrity on that subject," she said.

In return, Mrs Thatcher got the President's commitment to press ahead with the US Trident programme and "confirm his full support for the arrangements made to modernise Britain's independent nuclear deterrent" by purchasing the US system.

Doubts that the US might "do a Skybolt" and cancel a system, as it did in 1960, should now recede on the Tory benches — though Mrs Thatcher characteristically stated that she had never shared such doubts.

More important for Washington's conservative Nato allies, alarmed by sweeping talk of imminent nuclear disarmament by the superpowers in Reykjavik, Mrs Thatcher drew Mr Reagan away from what some British officials privately call "the visionary stuff" and "utopian talk" — some of which the US has tabled in Geneva — by identifying three priorities for arms control.

The first is Medium-range or INF agreement for "zero-zero" deployment in Europe only if there is agreement to restrain short-range missiles, which, Mrs Thatcher said again, "are stationed in such positions that they can fall on England and Wales".

The second is a 50 per cent cut over five years in the US and Soviet strategic offensive arsenals, with no mention of the British or French systems and none of the commitment which both superpowers pay lip-service to of eliminating all ballistic systems by 1996, together with cruise and bomber systems in the disputed Soviet version after Reykjavik.

The third is a ban on chemical weapons. "In all three cases," effective verification would be an essential element.

The Trident deal was reaffirmed without difficulty. Where officials on both sides who braved the light snow at Camp David seem to have had to work hardest was in the statement's longest paragraph, which eventually gave British participants considerable satisfaction and underlined the impression given by the Prime Minister herself that an arms-control deal is not just round the corner.

It read: "We confirmed that Nato's strategy of forward defence and flexible response would continue to require effective nuclear deterrence, based on a mix of systems. At the same time, reductions in nuclear weapons would increase the importance of eliminating conventional disparities. Nuclear weapons cannot be dealt with in isolation, given the need for stable overall balance at all times."

OBITUARY

Siobhan McKenna

By Michael Billington

SIOBHAN McKENNA, who has died at the age of 63, was one of the great Irish actresses. Her Saint Joan, which I saw at the St Martin's Theatre in 1955, and which won her the first ever Evening Standard Best Actress Award, was the most moving I have ever seen: a beaming, round-faced girl who had the defiant certainty of a born saint and whose cry of "God is alone" had, as Tynan attested at the time, "tears flowing everywhere in the house."

Miss McKenna was born in Belfast, educated at the National University of Ireland, and made her professional debut in Galway in 1940 in Tons Of Money. In Galway she gave her first Saint Joan in Gaelic, later moving to the Abbey Theatre, Dublin, playing in English.

In 1947 she made her London debut at the Embassy Theatre,



Siobhan McKenna

went on to play the title role in James Forsyth's Heloise in the West End, and in 1952 did a Shakespeare season in Stratford.

She was at home in many cities and cultures, the French theatre being one of her earliest passions. But, for the London playgoer, she is always associated with the Irish classics to which she brought a scrubbed, shining simplicity and a voice that carried its own lilting music.

Miss McKenna had a rare gift for tragedy. She played Juno in O'Casey's Juno And The Paycock in Dublin and London, taking over direction of a production of the Mermaid in 1973 on the death of Sean Kenny.

Her contribution to Irish theatre over the past half century was immense, and extended to direction and translation of plays in Gaelic. But she will be remembered above all for her acting, her capacity to make grief palpable, and to let her soul show when playing the great keening Irish heroines.

CND in £88 million hole

By Aileen Ballantyne

THE Conservative-controlled Hertford district council, deep in the comfortable Home Counties commuter belt, has granted outline planning permission for an underground nuclear shelter to house all the town's 22,000 people.

The plans were put forward by Hertford and Ware Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament in an attempt to embarrass the council. The local CND branch estimated that the 64-tier shelter would cost £88 million. All it has to do now is come up with the money.

The proposed site for the haven, 266 metres deep, complete with lifts, underground water supply and three-tier bunk beds, is in the grounds of Hertford Castle.

Permission to go ahead was given without discussion. The council leader, Mr John Sartin, said that there was no possibility of the shelter being built. "Can you imagine somebody putting £88 million into building a hole in the ground? It's lunatic."

He said that if the council had not granted permission, CND would have appealed to the Environment Secretary at vast cost to the ratepayer.

It is understood that under normal circumstances, the scheme would have been rejected because it did not meet the sewage requirements.

Why America is so foreign

EARLIER this month (November 9) a Guardian leader expressed a bafflement at its (the Guardian's in particular, and Europe's in general) inability to understand the United States, concluding, "for good or ill, it is becoming a much more foreign land." Indeed.

I am an American coming up to my first anniversary as an expatriate and in the year I have been living in London have had much time to think about the US and would like to explain this new strangeness to you.

The changes the Guardian notes and doesn't comprehend are real and are caused by a confluence of three things: a hideous decline in the standards of education after the second world war; the dramatic shift of population under 40 from the northeastern quarter of the country to the south and southwest; and the oligarchical control of the media.

From elementary school through a first degree at university, the US educational system does not produce, by European standards, literate people. It produces people capable of ingesting and regurgitating facts but incapable of ratiocination. The term American educators and sociologists use is functional illiteracy.

When a European, or a Guardian leader writer, meets an American graduate they automatically

By Michael Goldfarb

assume that there is a shared heritage of knowledge. Wrong. American education is, by and large, memorizing facts.

After 15 years of this sort of schooling any concept that cannot be reduced to true, false or sometimes (as the questions appear on the standardized college entrance tests) is not admitted as knowledge at all.

On the population shift, particularly of people under 40: Europeans come to the US to visit the Great Metropolises of the East and West Coast or rough and windy Chicago. They see on the streets recognizable faces and shapes of lives and assume that US life is like their own.

Forget it. That isn't the way most of the country lives.

Visitors don't go out to the junctions of the interstate highways, to the communities sprung up along the ringroads surrounding the Sunbelt cities whose existence is owed to the coming of the six-lane blacktop. Sitting out there are great, sprawling developments of mock-Tudor, mock-Spanish houses with a neon strip of shopping malls and fast food franchises.

These sprawling places which have sprung up in the last 20 years are inhabited primarily by refugees from the mill towns of the rust belt and the small farming communities of the upper midwest.

The people who were forced to move are primarily white, working, and lower middle class. With the recent exception of Bruce Springsteen, they traditionally have had no cultural voice. One of the reasons East Coast intellectuals, the main interpreters of American culture to Europeans, consistently misunderstand what's going on in America is they have not bothered to explore these communities. My guess is because these communities are distinctly un-European when compared to the densely packed mill towns.

So there is this block of the body politic, wrenched from their roots, and home soil, not by bombs, but by distant international political events and the painful reality of over-population in a post-industrial age (concepts they can't grasp because they cannot be reduced to True and False). With the life they grew up expecting to live no longer possible, they try to set down roots in windswept desert soil and fail.

They come home from work and put on the TV and see a relentless stream of Evangelists offering simple ideas about how to feel better, and about salvation, ideas that do reduce to true and false. The evangelists invite them to become part of a community (and please send $10 to my ministry). And many do.

Or they switch on the news and hear a President presenting simple messages night after night, often very close to the message their evangelist is presenting. Communism is evil. Sandinistas are bad. Russians lie. Having been educated in the American way, slogans they can understand, ideas they can't.

The structure of network news in which complex issues are boiled down to information nuggets with good pictures abets this sloganizing. Which brings us to the third factor.

The oligarchical control of the media — you have the three networks, whose differences are gauged not by editorial or institutional commitments but by the on-camera persona of their news presenters.

The reason that there is no difference is that their bills are paid by their advertisers and the business of television is tailored to suit their needs and the needs of their intermediaries, the ad agencies. It is impossible to imagine one of the networks saying, look the President is giving the same speech over and over again in carefully stage managed public appearances, this is not news so we won't cover the event.

A network couldn't risk offending their advertisers, who, given the rates the networks charge for ad time, tend to be very large corporations, often multinationals, whose chief executives tend to be of the same philosophic stripe as the President.

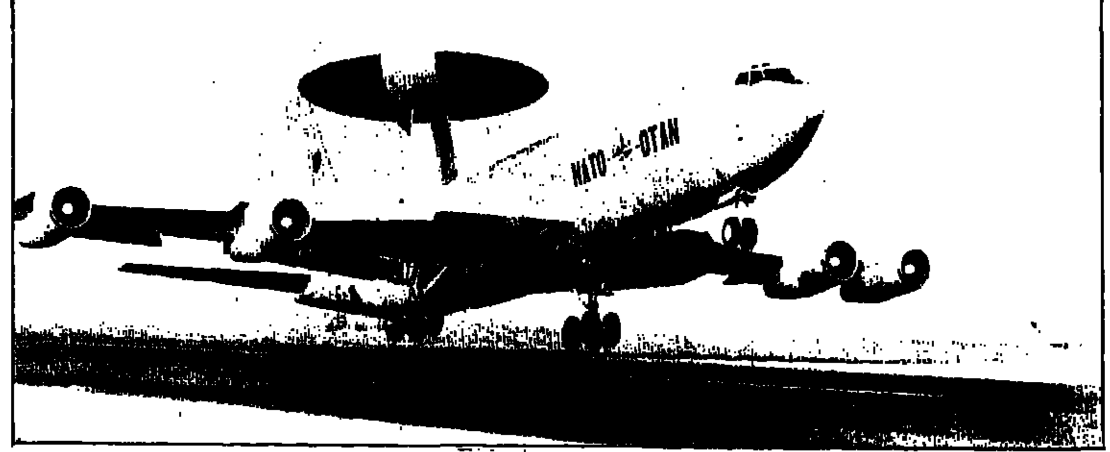
The White House media staff are aware of this. So the circus goes on the road, the President gets off a good quote line and there is an outstanding visual effect at the rally and night after night the President's men get the equivalent of a free party political broadcast in the guise of a news report.

And isolated in the new towns, where connection to the larger world is through the TV set, the President's message seen daily for years at a time becomes the truth in spite of the evidence of people's underdeveloped reasoning capacity.

The power of television can't be minimised. There is a good reason why political candidates pay millions of dollars to buy air time.

So there it is. You have a population under 40 who can absorb data but can't think, living isolated from their roots in sprawling ex-urbs of hideous sameness seeking a sense of community, not in each other but by what they get through the tube.

The Reagan machine, with its staff culled from Los Angeles ad agencies and market research firms, understands all this and have found the perfect cypher on which to write their message. The Democrats have someone as media effective, Mario Cuomo. It remains to be seen if they have the intelligence to nominate him.



An Awacs aircraft leaving RAF Waddington near Lincoln on a sales drive last week.

US Falklands line annoys Britain

By Hella Pick

BRITAIN is deeply disappointed by the Reagan administration's decision to join the other members of the Organisation of American States in censuring the Government's unilateral imposition of a 150-mile fishing zone around the Falkland Islands. Mrs Thatcher is thought to have brought the matter up at the weekend talks with President Reagan in Washington at Camp David.

But officials insisted that the US could not have acted differently in the context of the OAS meeting, and that Mr George Shultz had sought to water down the OAS resolution against Britain.

During the Falklands war the United States gave Britain logistical support as well as help with intelligence-gathering, even though this risked compromising its relations with Latin American governments. But since 1982 the US has voted in support of UN resolutions, calling for a negotiated solution to the rival claims for the islands' sovereignty.

Even so, it is hardly welcome in London that Mr Shultz, the US Secretary of State, has now voted in support of an OAS resolution that expresses "strong concern over the new element of tension and potential conflict, introduced by the declaration of October 19" (Britain's declaration of the fishing zone) and which urges Britain as well as Argentina "not to take actions that introduce changes in the already delicate situation."

The Americans are said to have been forthright in expressing their displeasure with the government's imposition of the fishing zone around the Falklands, arguing that this was unnecessarily provocative and further complicated any attempt to secure a negotiated settlement between Britain and Argentina on the sovereignty issue.

The US, even if it supported Mrs Thatcher during the Falklands war, has long felt that Britain is too inflexible on the sovereignty issue, and that the Government should be more ready to negotiate with Argentina, now that it has a democratically elected government. The government's decision to impose the fishing zone, and its warning of military action against unlicensed trawlers inside the area is said to have angered Washington.

The Administration has not been impressed with the flood of explanations from Whitehall, justifying the move almost entirely in terms of the urgent necessity of conserving the area's fisheries resources.

In justification of its action Britain has complained that Argentina, in signing fisheries agreements with the Soviet Union and Bulgaria, deliberately set out to provoke Britain by encouraging these two countries to fish near the Falklands, and writing Argentina's sovereignty claims into both agreements.

But the British case has won very little sympathy. Spain, with its close links to Argentina, was among the first to condemn the British move, and has warned that its trawlers are unlikely to apply for fishing licences from Britain.

The Soviet Union has criticised the British move but has not said what it intends to do about its future fishing around the Falklands. The Foreign Secretary, Sir Geoffrey Howe, is said to be optimistic that the Russians will avoid any situation that risks a clash with the Royal Navy in the Falklands.

The new fishing season begins in February. But well in advance of this, Britain's ability to assert its role over the fisheries zone will be tested by the extent that trawlers from other countries apply for fisheries licences.

Alex Brummer in Washington adds: The Reagan Administration has signalled that it will continue to tilt towards Argentina in the fisheries dispute. The White House disclosed that President Reagan had telephoned the Argentine leader, Mr Raul Alfonsin, on November 3, to express US concern about the establishment of the fishing limit. American officials said the status of the Falklands was high on the agenda when the two presidents met in Washington last week.

American officials said the situation in Argentina now was entirely different from that in 1982, during the Falklands war, when Argentina was run by an insensitive military dictator.

Argentinian navy boosted

By Jeremy Morgan in Buenos Aires

ARGENTINA'S efforts to boost its military capacity in the South Atlantic took another step forward last week when President Raul Alfonsin launched a modern missile frigate and formally handed over another to the navy.

Both ships are armed with M-38 Exocet sea-to-sea missiles made in France and assembled in Argentina and the vessels are reported to have a top speed of 27 knots. The 1,700-ton ships, built at Argentina's naval shipyards to a design by Bloehm and Voss of West Germany, are the last two of a series of six missile frigates destined for the navy.

Defence observers here commented the frigate fleet would be a "useful complement" to Argentina's only aircraft carrier, the 25 de Mayo.

The aircraft carrier spent all but the initial stages of the Falklands war tied up in dock at the navy's base at Puerto Belgrano, 700 miles south of Buenos Aires. But it was hurriedly reconditioned after the war and an extension of its landing deck means that since 1983 it has been suitable for use with Etendard, the French-made aircraft that inflicted so much damage with Exocet attacks on Britain's Falklands task force.

However, the future of the navy's surface fleet remains in doubt. With the admirals' interest focused on a submarine programme, it is thought that some of the frigates could be sold to raise finance.

President Alfonsin's Government insists that there have been no new warships or weapons purchases since it took office in late 1983.

Boeing promises jobs

By David Fairhall

IF the RAF finally decides to buy the American Boeing Awacs radar aircraft instead of the British Aerospace-GEC Nimrod the US company has promised that it will more than cover the cost by placing contracts with British industry.

Boeing's vice-president, Mr Jerry King, said that its "best and final offer", submitted to the Ministry of Defence, has increased the promised offset from 100 to 130 per cent of the contract value within eight years. Mr King would not disclose the absolute value, but he estimated that the offset programme in its peak year would generate about 8,000 jobs, many of them in hi-tech area.

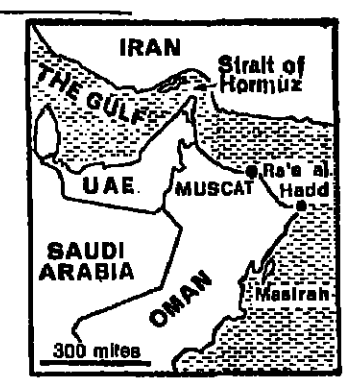
At the MoD's request Boeing has quoted separate prices for a fleet of eight or six E-3 Awacs aircraft, purchased on their own or in conjunction with a small number for the French Air Force — the larger combined total would slightly reduce the unit cost. The RAF Awacs numbers are equivalent to a Nimrod fleet of 10 or eight aircraft.

The high initial price of the Awacs is one of Boeing's disadvantages in competing with Nimrod — the other being the Government's concern about losing a British capability in this area.

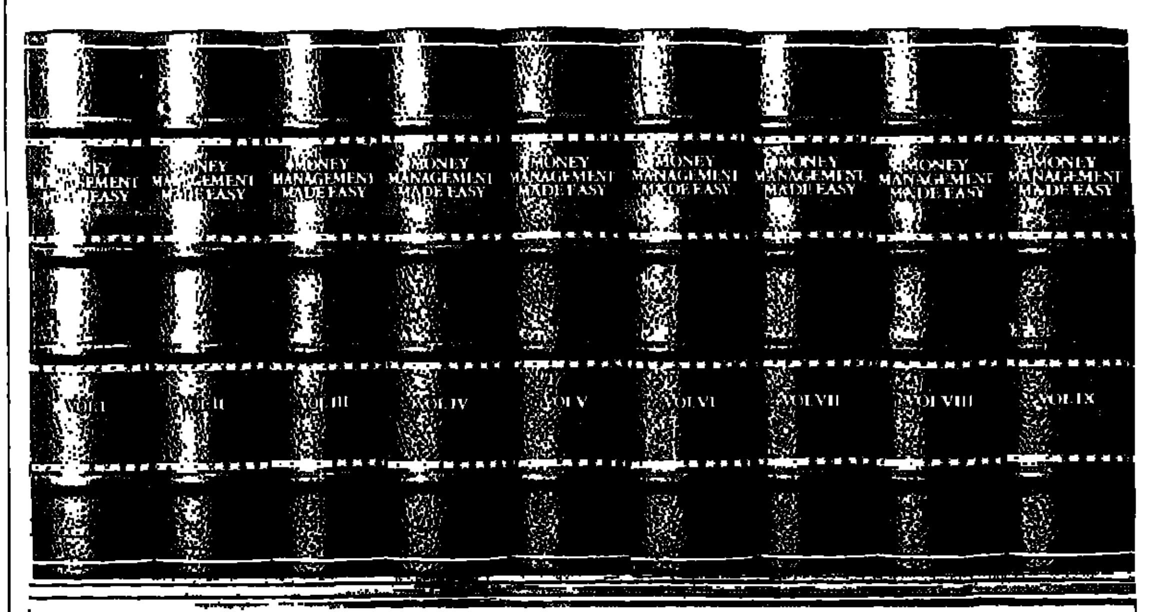
Oman exercise

FOR the first time since the Falklands campaign a substantial British tri-service force will be exercising later this month outside its familiar Nato area. The aim is to demonstrate that Britain still retains the ability to airlift a force of brigade size over several thousand miles, with air and naval support, either to fulfil a residual military commitment or go to the aid of a friendly nation.

The setting for the exercise, codenamed Saif Sareea (Swift Sword), is the Arab sultanate of Oman, at the entrance to the Gulf. The premise of the war game is that Oman has appealed for British military assistance against an unspecified "external threat".



Some 5,000 men will take part with ships, four Tornado bombers and two air defence Tornados.



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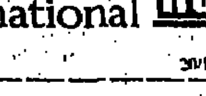
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THE WEEK

Rolando Olalia

THE mutilated body of the top Filipino leftwing labour leader, Rolando Olalia, was discovered in Manila.

Government leaders expressed shock over the torture and killing of Mr Olalia, and leftist leaders called for massive protests. Leftist leaders accused the military of involvement in the murder.

Mr Olalia was killed a day after announcing that leftist groups would rally behind President Aquino if disgruntled military officers attempted to seize power.

KIM IL SUNG, President of North Korea, welcomed a visiting Mongolian delegation in Pyongyang on Tuesday, giving the lie to reports that he had been assassinated. He has been "assassinated" by rumour several times previously, but there is speculation that he is involved in difficulty in getting his son, Kim Jong Il, nominated to succeed him.

ISRAEL'S Foreign Minister, Mr Peres, said he had cleared up "a misunderstanding" with Britain after explaining in a telephone call to Mrs Thatcher that Israel had not abducted the nuclear technician, Mr Mordechai Vanunu, from British soil.

Mr Vanunu had revealed secrets of Israel's nuclear weapons programme in articles in the Sunday Times.

ISRAELI aircraft attacked a Palestinian guerrilla naval base near the port of Sidon in south Lebanon, injuring five people.

The air raid came a day after a Jewish seminary student was killed in Jerusalem by Arab guerrillas.

The next day Israeli helicopters attacked another Palestinian base in the Sidon area.

POLICE with dogs charged striking black workers at General Motors' car plant in Port Elizabeth. The strike was caused by the company's plan to "disinvest" from South Africa and sell the business to local management. Black workers downed tools, protesting that they had not been consulted. Since then 567 of them have been dismissed. Police were called in when altercations erupted between strikers and new workers brought in to take their jobs.

TWO cabinet ministers in the former Lesotho Government of Chief Leabua Jonathan were abducted by armed men at the weekend, driven into the mountains, and shot dead, according to a family friend.

Mr Desmond Sixishe, the Minister of Information and Broadcasting under Chief Jonathan, and Mr Vincent Makhele, the Foreign Minister, were visiting a friend with their wives when they and their hosts were kidnapped at gunpoint, taken into the Maluti mountains, and shot.

CHILE'S Socialist leader, Jorge Molina, confirmed that he, Pedro Correa, for the conservative National Party, and Eugenio Ortega, for the Christian Democrats met two military chiefs separately to give them copies of the Bases to Sustain a Democratic Regime, an 87-point political pact signed in September by 13 parties ranging from right to moderate Marxist left.

The meetings with the police chief, General Rodolfo Stange, and the navy's commander-in-chief, Admiral Jose Toribio Merino, were the first formal contacts between the armed forces commanders and the opposition in 13 years of military rule.

PAKISTAN'S President, General Zia, has claimed that India is massing troops on the border with his country.

India denied any aggressive intent, saying movements related to training purposes.

In India at least ten people have been killed by Sikh terrorists in Hindu reprisals in the Punjab leading to riots and curfews.

Renault boss shot dead

By Campbell Page in Paris

THE French terrorist group, Action Directe, is suspected of killing Mr Georges Besse, chairman of the state-owned Renault car company, as he returned to his Paris home on Monday night.

Mr Besse, aged 58, was walking the short distance from his chauffeur-driven car to his first floor flat in Montparnasse when he was hit in the head and chest by several bullets and fell bleeding heavily to the pavement. By the time his family rushed to his side, he was already dead. Neighbours said they heard five shots. The attack was apparently carried out by a man and a woman on a motorcycle.

The Prime Minister, Mr Jacques Chirac, flanked by Mr Robert Pandraud, Minister for Security, rushed to the scene. Mr Chirac said that he was "horrified by the bestial murder" of Besse. "Nothing can justify or explain such a gesture. Such an act demands that all be done to find and punish the guilty."

In a message from Africa, where he is on tour, President Francois Mitterrand said: "The death of this remarkable man, in such tragic circumstances, is a great loss for his family, for Renault, and for France."

The international wing of Action Directe, which is linked with West Germany's notorious Red Army Faction, is usually thought responsible for such drastic terrorist attacks as the murder of General Rene Audran in January, 1985, and an unsuccessful attempt on the life of a vice president of the national employers organisation, Mr Guy Brana this April.

Police investigating the shooting thought it might have been timed as a warning to the authorities before the forthcoming trial of an Action Directe leader accused of murdering two policemen here in 1982.

The government, shaken by the wave of Middle Eastern terror attacks which reached their peak in September, now seems to face a severe internal challenge. Politicians, industrialists and trade unionists reacted swiftly and indignantly to the murder of a respected national figure.

The trade union, FGMM-CFDT, said that nothing could justify such an act. Mr Yvon Gattaz, president of the employers organisation, CNPF, paid tribute to a self-made man and asked why such blind violence was directed against industrialists who had never taken part in politics.

Mr Besse, who had established his reputation in the nuclear industry and as head of the metals group, Pechiney, took over Renault in January, 1985, after the company had emerged from an expansionist period with heavy losses.

These amounted to £1.3 billion in 1985, and were expected to fall to £50 million this year. Renault, it was hoped, would be in the black by late next year.

Outsider on the inside

IVAN BOESKY, the Wall Street wheeler-dealer who was fined a record $100 million for insider trading at the weekend, had an edge: he slept only two hours a night. While rivals snored, he played international tunes on his 300 telephone buttons.

"Vampires live on blood," he once commented on this restlessness. "I live on coffee. It's vampire's plasma."

Although he likened his body to "a Mercedes on the autobahn that doesn't stop running," this induced throttle confusion. "I am not proud about it," he said. "I have often thought it would be nice to sleep a long time." He may get his wish: his guilty plea to one criminal count could earn him up to five years in the slammer.

Boesky, aged 49, is the son of a Detroit delicatessen owner who emigrated from Russia in 1912. His book Merger Mania, published last year, was dedicated to his father's memory with the words "His life remains an example of returning to the community the benefits he had received through the exercise of God-given talents."

What Boesky, one of America's richest men, did not reveal was that his own talents did not multiply by the algebraic ju-ju detailed in such chapters as "The Saturday Night Special" and "Tender Offers", but by insider trading and a huge network of contacts unavailable to punters hoping to emulate his success at corporate raiding and mega-mergers.

The Wall Street Journal called him a latterday Great Gatsby — "the self-made Mid-westerner struggling to fit in with the East Coast financial establishment, whose compulsion to accumulate a prodigious fortune brings him down catastrophically."

He left Detroit in 1966, with wrestling skills, a lawyer's qualifications, and rejection slips from several big Detroit firms. He cast his bread liberally on the waters, buying his way into the exclusive Harvard Club in New York and becoming a trustee of New York University.

He rose politically through the Jewish lobby, crowned by his invitation to the White House with Jewish leaders to discuss missile sales to Saudi Arabia.

But insecurity fuelled a greed which one arbitrager has described as beyond the wildest imaginings of mere mortals. Once, strolling down the Champs Elyees, his wife is said to have remarked: "It's a beautiful evening, just look at the moon." He replied: "What good is the moon if you can't buy or sell it?" But doubts intruded. "It's a sickness I have, in the face of which I am helpless," he said.

His staff, whom he was wont to observe on his deskside bank of TV monitors, found his behaviour vacillated between harshness and gentility. The paradoxes were summed up on a T-shirt which he sometimes displayed. It read: "He who owns the most when he dies wins."

Israelis knew of El Al plot

By Ian Black in Jerusalem

ISRAELI intelligence received an advance general warning, from an Arab source, of a plot to blow up an Israeli civilian airliner earlier this year. It was this heightened state of alertness that led to the discovery of the bomb that Nezar Hindawi's girlfriend was carrying as she tried to board an El Al flight at Heathrow airport last April.

Inconsistencies and gaps in Hindawi's evidence, and the highly favourable results for Israel, led many observers to argue that Israel's Mossad secret service was somehow involved in the affair. In the extreme version, the whole operation was somehow masterminded by Mossad. Another theory was that Israel had got wind of the plot and allowed it to run its course — almost until the end — in order to reap maximum political capital.

But new information from Jerusalem and Damascus this week suggests a far less conspiratorial — but no less intriguing — explanation for how the plot was foiled. Had the bomb gone off, it would almost certainly have led to a new Middle East war, initiated by Israel in revenge for Syrian involvement in the operation.

Intelligence sources now say that early this year Israel received a general warning, from an unspecified Arab source, of a plot to blow up an El Al plane.

The sources refuse to say whether the information came from an officer in Syrian air force intelligence, Lieutenant Colonel Mufid Akour, who is now reported to be in detention in Damascus on suspicion of being an Israeli spy.

Colonel Akour, who was mentioned by Hindawi as one of the officers involved in the mission, is thought to be a deputy to Lieutenant-Colonel Haitham Said, head of recruitment and foreign operations for air force intelligence in Damascus.

Western diplomats in the Syrian capital were told privately by government officials last month — shortly before the end of the Hindawi trial and Britain's dramatic decision to sever relations — that President Assad now knew who was responsible for the operation and would deal with him when the time was ripe.

Israeli intelligence is now convinced that Assad himself, who is renowned for his caution and circumspection in the face of a militarily superior enemy, did not know about the El Al operation and that it was the result of a power struggle between one or more of the half-dozen Syrian security and intelligence organisations.

It remains unclear, however, whether Colonel Akour is under suspicion as the man who initiated the London operation without clearance from above, or whether he warned the Israelis that they should be on their guard in general about a plot to plant a bomb on an El Al plane.

Ciba-Geigy accused of polluting Rhine

By Sara Lenz in Basle

SWITZERLAND'S largest chemical company, Ciba-Geigy, has been spilling high concentrations of weedkiller into the Rhine for more than a year, according to the environmental organisation, Greenpeace.

The authorities in Basle have confiscated all Ciba's records on production of the herbicide, Atrazine, to investigate whether the company has been violating pollution regulations. Ciba refused to comment.

Atrazine is used by farmers to kill weeds. It halts the photosynthesis of river plants for more than a year. Greenpeace claims that dangerous quantities of Atrazine must have penetrated the food chain all along the Rhine and entered the North Sea.

Greenpeace's chemical coordinator, Mr Stefan Weber, found an Atrazine concentration of more than 1.5 grammes per cubic metre in the water purification plants of Ciba's Schweizerhalle factory on October 27, 12 days before the company admitted accidentally spilling 400 litres of the chemical into the Rhine from another plant several miles downstream.

Ciba admitted the leak only after West German scientists found unusually high concentrations of Atrazine in the river. Mr Weber started his investigations after the University of Karlsruhe in West Germany published data this summer showing that Atrazine traces of the same high concentration were found near the Schweizerhalle plant between August and October last year.

Several hundred kilograms of agricultural chemicals that sank to the bed of the Rhine following the fire at the Sandoz factory in Basle could wash downstream and cause another environmental disaster if heavy rain falls over Basle in the next few days, according to Dr Benedict Hurni, director of the canton's Water Protection Agency.

Dr Hurni told a press conference at the Sandoz headquarters that a flood or heavy rain would stir up the Rhine bed and prompt a "recurrence of the chemical pollution" along Western Europe's major waterway.

Swiss authorities hope to remove this threat by sucking the toxic sludge that contains lethal mercury off the river floor as soon as possible, Dr Hurni said.

Dr Gerhard Schmid, a Sandoz director, said the company would "of course meet demands" for compensation for damages caused by the spill, but it must be "legally substantiated" that the contaminated waste originated from Sandoz. Sandoz has liability insurance "commensurate with the norms of the chemical industry," and it covers environmental damage caused by accidents, he said.

The Swiss President, Mr Alphons Egli, last week hosted a meeting with the environment ministers of West Germany, France, Holland, and Luxembourg, and the EEC Commissioner for the Environment, who agreed that the International Rhine Commission should consider improved safety measures.

The commission has been charged with working out how to establish exactly what the Swiss and, more specifically, Sandoz should pay for. "We cannot be expected to pay for all the pollution in the Rhine," Mr Egli said.

Le Monde, page 12

MI5 trial starts

By Richard Norton-Taylor in Sydney

THE British Government suffered a further setback in the Australian courts when it failed to delay the trial caused by its own attempt to prevent publication of the memoirs of former MI5 officer Mr Peter Wright. The New South Wales Appeal Court ruled that there was no reason why the trial — to be conducted by Mr Justice Powell who last week sharply attacked the Government for indulging in "mumbo jumbo" and "serpentine weavings" — should not go ahead.

The trial before the New South Wales Supreme Court began with the reading of affadavits from Sir Robert Armstrong, the Cabinet Secretary, and an affidavit from an unnamed former MI5 officer who trained Mr Wright in the early 1950s.

Sir Robert argues that Mr Wright is in breach of his duty of confidentiality, that the knowledge gleaned from books by former members of the security service could help terrorists, and that if Mr Wright were allowed to publish his memoirs individuals who voluntarily helped MI5 would no longer have the confidence to do so.

Reagan fails to quell unease

By Alex Brummer in Washington

PRESIDENT REAGAN'S folksy attempt to explain away his flip-flop on America's policy towards dealing with Iran's state-sponsored terrorism has failed to quell congressional criticism or ease the deep-seated concerns of Americans.

The President's 15-minute televised speech, delivered at breakneck speed during prime-time television, was seen by critics in the political and foreign policy establishment as riddled with evasions and half-truths. There were also some clear signs that Americans — having endured a 444-day trauma with Iran in 1979-80 — are not yet psychologically prepared to trust Ayatollah Khomeini's regime or tolerate weapons systems deliveries.

The first reaction from Tehran hardly appeared to justify the White House's confidence that it was dealing with the right people in the revolutionary regime. The Iranian President, Mr Ali Khamenei, said that the US may have had discussions "with international smugglers, perhaps, this has nothing to do with us." Mr Reagan "agreed there was no proof that Iran had anything to do with or supported terrorism," he added.

For many critics, the most damaging aspect of Mr Reagan's approach was his attempt to obscure the truth and shift the blame for what is being described here as America's most serious foreign policy blunder in 25 years from his own hearth to that of others.

It was the press — always an easy target — which was responsible for the "rumours" and the "utterly false" charges that the US "has shipped weapons to Iran as ransom payment for hostages." This was a dangerous slip into Nixonian self-righteous rhetoric.

In the hours after Mr Reagan's address several of his key points have been disputed. The President's statement that only small amounts of defensive weapons were shipped is seen as wrong on two counts: some of the American material shipped, officials now acknowledge, was offensive.

Similarly, Mr Reagan's suggestion that he had taken the proper steps in informing Congress and had broken no laws is also seen as pushing the truth to the limit.

What actually happened was that 18 months ago the President and a small coterie of officials, many of whom have never been confirmed by the Senate, rewrote the executive orders covering dealings with Iran. This secretly lifted the Carter arms embargo. Members of his Administration, elected representatives on Capitol Hill and Americans were never informed of perhaps the most important policy reversal of his Administration.

The issues, together with the US's duplicitious policy of criticising other countries from China to European allies for dealing with Iran, while doing it itself, are certain to be high on the agenda when congressional hearings open.

In strategic terms, Mr Reagan's analysis of why the US is seeking Iran's support now is at variance with what the Administration has been doing for the last six years. Last spring, Mr Reagan battled it out with Congress using a different rationale: he argued that advanced missiles including hand-held Stingers had to be shipped to Saudi Arabia because of the threat from Iran. How could the Ayatollah be a strategic threat on the one hand to the Islamic Gulf oilfields and of strategic importance to the US on the other hand?

Similarly, how could Ayatollah Khomeini be described publicly by the President on July 8, 1985, as a "new international version of Murder Incorporated" while the US arranged shipments of weapons systems both indirectly and directly to commit those "murders"?

The embattled National Security Adviser, Admiral John Poindexter, whose job seems in serious danger, was explaining last week that it was all a big mistake and Iran was not after all a terrorist state.

If that is the case why had the US set up Operations Staunch precisely to stop the flow of weapons to Iran, and ordered the customs service, FBI and foreign governments to do the same because Tehran was on its terrorist list?

Much of this "spin" — aimed at leaving the White House smelling of roses — does not appear to have impressed Congress or Americans in the same way as the post Reykjavik blitz.

The scenes of fanatical students and bearded Ayatollahs abusing the name of the US and burning the flag and effigies of its leaders on the streets has left an indelible impression on the American psyche. Even the great communicator, who rose into office promising "swift and effective retribution" for terrorists may not communicate his way out of trouble this time.

A fair measure of Mr Reagan's trouble came from Senator Barry Goldwater, the retiring chairman of the Senate Armed Services Committee, in whose 1964 presidential campaign Mr Reagan cut his national political teeth. He described the sale of military equipment to Iran as a "dreadful mistake, probably one of the most major mistakes the US has ever made in foreign policy."

Kept in the dark

By Michael White in Washington

NOT only did Mr Reagan instruct CIA director William Casey to keep Congress in the dark about the Iranian deal (see page 15) but the chairman of the Joint Chief of Staff, Admiral Crowe, was also kept in the dark — the first he knew about it was from the newspapers.

Since Admiral Crowe is only just recovering from the shock of President Reagan's willingness in Reykjavik to contemplate giving up all strategic weapons (also without consultation) he was reported last week to have asked all his top staff officers if they knew: they did not. The irony is underlined by the curious fact that Admiral Poindexter is still a serving officer, as is Lieutenant-Colonel Oliver North, of the NSC staff, who is said to have accompanied Mr MacFarlane (also a marine colonel, but retired) on his abortive mission to Tehran.



Another fine mess, Ollie

THE mysterious White House aide Lt Col Oliver North, whose disappearance at the weekend touched off jitters about another US cakewalk in Iran, has been a key figure in most of America's recent covert operations.

The 43-year-old Marine officer is reported to have played a leading role in planning the invasion of Grenada, the mining of Nicaraguan harbours, the aerial interception of Arab terrorists after the Achille Lauro hijack and the illegal direction of contra forces.

North's emergence in the secret White House trade of arms for hostages renews questions about the resignation last year of his boss, Robert McFarlane, as national security adviser. McFarlane, who has since popped up in Iran with a bizarre spying kit that included an Irish passport and a cake, is also a Marine officer and the man responsible for North's remarkable rise to power.

North, who is officially deputy director of the National Security Council's political-military affairs branch, is said to have relied on a network of military officers and civilian operatives whom he met in the Vietnam War (where he won the Silver Star and two injury medals — "Ollie still carries metal around," according to a colleague).

One of these contacts was the shadowy General John Singlaub, whose private fund-raising for the Nicaraguan contras is believed to have been directed by North, circumventing a ban on official contact with the rebels.

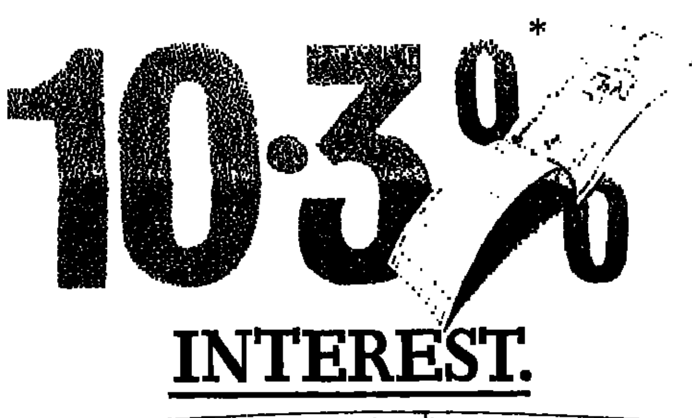
North's propensity for mission impossible earned him the nickname Knight Rider. An associate says: "Whether you like it or not a government needs the kind of people who get on a plane and fly into a Central American jungle, no questions asked. Ollie's perfectly suited to that job."

Critics are wondering how many more fine messes Ollie will get America into. A buttoned-down Texan, he is said to be driven by a consuming hatred of communism. Two years ago he turned down an unrepeatable offer of a marine command, perhaps content that his White House position allowed him to pull rank on senior officers in the name of the President — a privilege which caused deep resentment.

The price has been high. Last year his family moved into a military base after his dog was poisoned, his home picketed and a stream of threatening phone calls protested at his exposed contra links. He was also named as a target by the Abu Musa faction.

Described as an action officer who reads the President's mind, North once participated in an operation called Educating Ronald Reagan. This required "exposing the president to the realities of nuclear conflict." Just how he achieved this, and what equipment he had access to, is not known.

FILL IN THE COUPON. THEN FILL IN CHEQUES FROM A DEPOSIT ACCOUNT THAT PAYS OVER



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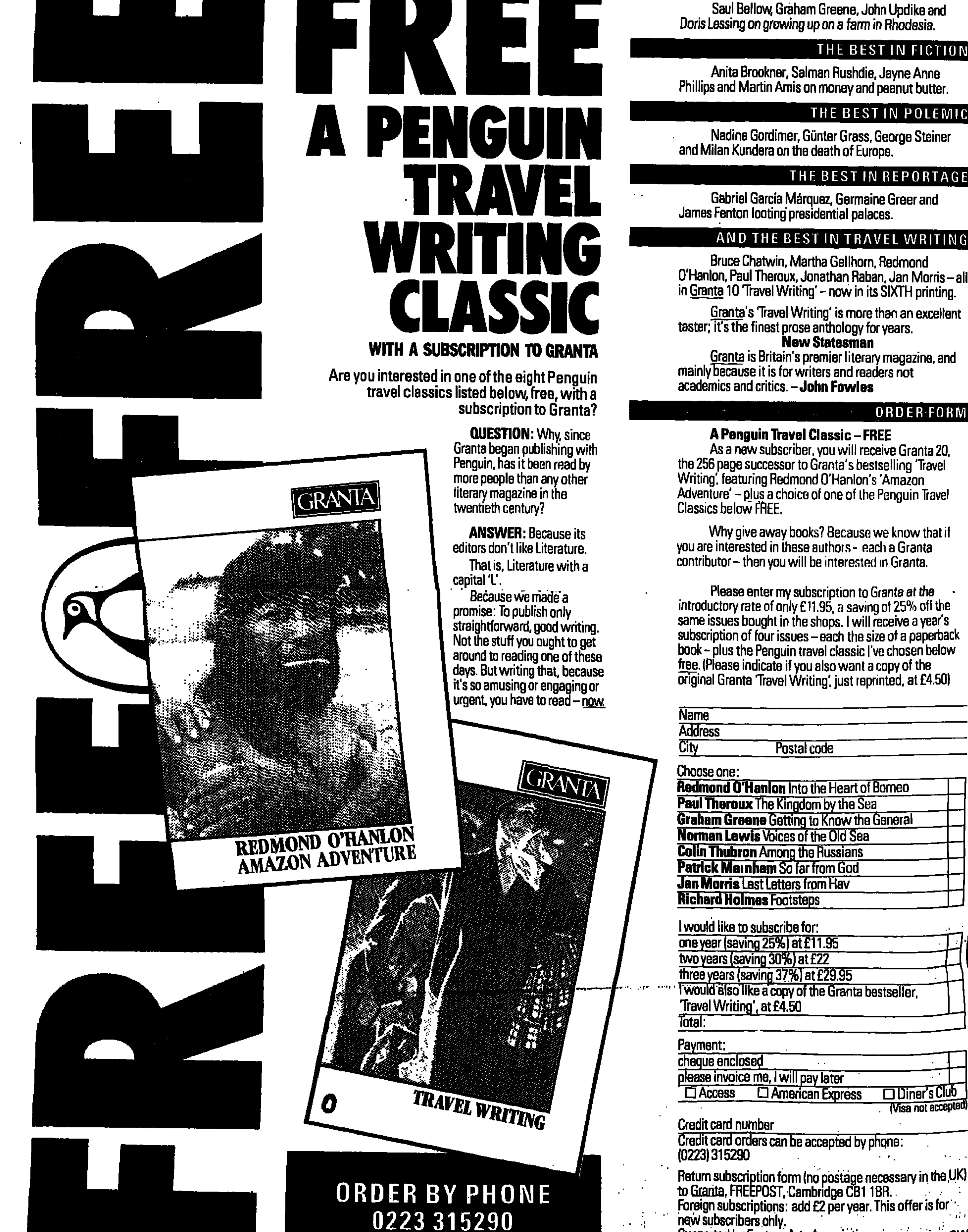
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Don't underestimate the Russians

By Martin Walker in Moscow

IF ANY single strategic objective emerges from the Babel of Washington's foreign policy, it is to rely on Star Wars as a fail-safe political tool, even if it is not a guaranteed weapon.

Should it never actually work, but simply keep America's military-industrial complex in the style to which is has grown accustomed, it will still put intolerable pressure on the Soviet economy. It is designed either to bully Mr Gorbachev, or to bankrupt him. At the very least, it will force him to put his grandiose plans for the domestic economy on to the back-burner, and pour scarce roubles into a crash military programme to catch up. That, at least, is the theory.

The problem with this policy, which doubtless looks good in a White House whose own economy is under increasing strain from defence-swollen budgets and deficits, is that it may be based on a flawed interpretation of how the Soviet economy actually works.

The theory is based on that simplistic mathematical model known as the zero-sum game, in which whatever is put into one side of the equation must necessarily have been subtracted from the other side. But it ignores the possibility of spin-off — of investment in military high-tech paying off handsomely in the civilian sector.

This is odd, because this kind of spin-off has undoubtedly worked well in Western economies. American computer and chip design has benefited from years of Pentagon investment. The hard times for Ford and Chrysler and General Motors were eased by Pentagon orders for military hardware.

And in much the same way, the Soviet civilian economy has long benefited from military investment. Indeed, the two economies overlap to a striking degree. The best refrigerator on the market is the Biryusa model, which is turned out by the factories of the Strategic Rocket Forces. The best vacuum cleaner is the Raketa, produced by the Ministry of Aviation factories, which also turn out excellent children's prams.

This symbiosis between civilian and defence sectors has always confused Western analysts, because it makes it so difficult to work out just what proportion of the GNP Moscow is spending on its war machine.

In some cases the same factories turn out short-wave radios and optical lenses and trucks and specialist clothing for both soldiers and civilians alike. Bear in mind that one vital input for Western intelligence is to take satellite pictures of defence factories, work out their floor space and extrapolate military production from that. This is the kind of hit and miss guesswork which led the CIA to downgrade its estimate of Soviet defence spending over the past decade from an annual 5 per cent growth rate to 2 per cent or even less.

But the immense technical and, perhaps more important, managerial reserves available within the defence sector are no secret to the Politburo. Among Mikhail Gorbachev's first appointments to the rank of deputy Prime Ministers were three relatively young professional technocrats and managers from the defence industries.

Even more than the symbiosis between civilian and defence sectors, the main reason why Mr Gorbachev is unconvinced by the threat of Star Wars is that he comprehends the nature of the Soviet system. Whenever the state is presented with a supreme challenge, its ability as a totalitarian structure to mobilise all state resources behind one clear objective has hitherto guaranteed success.

The classic example of the system's resilience and capacity to meet a challenge came in 1941. Having lost half its industry, most of its coal mines and power stations and steel mills, and a third of its population to Hitler's invasion, the system absorbed these desperate losses and slowly, awesomely recovered. By 1943, it was producing more tanks and aircraft than Germany. By 1945, the Red Army had fought all the way back to Berlin.

Old history, you may say. The system no longer works that way, and Mikhail Gorbachev is not the man to impose the merciless discipline that could whip the country into line. But consider Chernobyl.

Clearly, that the disaster happened at all, and the way it happened, stands as a monstrous indictment of Soviet administration and management. But as the days passed, and it became increasingly evident that the scientists and technicians conscripted into Chernobyl were fighting a melt-down, the level of their achievement became steadily more impressive. They were confronting and solving problems that no one on earth had ever faced before.

It was not just that they brought the rogue reactor under control that was so striking, it was the way that so many other huge efforts were being mobilised at once. There were three separate waves of evacuation, that finally involved over 200,000 people, while from Kiev 200 miles north to Gomel the decontamination teams were sluicing down the roads and trees and houses, cleaning the wells, and bulldozing the top soil.

There was the alternative water supply to be built for Kiev, and the food from safe parts of the country to be found and brought to feed some five million people. In Kiev and the affected zones, there were the mass screening programme, the evacuation of Kiev's children, and a great many tough decisions to make.

And they were made with a brutally realistic sense of priorities.

The way the Soviet system reacted to Chernobyl was the old Russian steam-roller in a new form, obedient, single-minded, and stunningly effective. And if it must, it will respond to the challenge of Star Wars in the same way. If it means sacrifice, then few people on earth have shown the endurance of the Russians. This is a country where they do not just tighten their belts. If needs be, they eat them.

But the Russian steam-roller is guided by microchips these days. This complex and powerful economy can react in unexpected ways to sudden surges of high-tech investment being made available to scientists who are given carte blanche — and an open cheque. And after the tragedy of the Challenger space shuttle, it is a dangerously over-confident US that relies on its technological lead.

"This is a country where they do not just tighten their belts. If need be, they eat them"

The roads in Rome

By George Armstrong

THE AIR in Rome now has the highest concentration of carbon dioxide in the world. In the last 35 years, locally-registered vehicles has risen from 30,000 to 1.5 million, or one for every two residents.

Environmental watchdogs claim that in the last seven years the pollution in Rome's historic centre has risen by 43 points, while West Berlin's has fallen by 14 points, and New York's by 18.

Last month, Mr Gianfranco Amendola, a Rome magistrate, set up pollution measuring points in the city centre, as well as mobile units for certain crossroads outside the old city walls.

On the basis of early results he announced last week that if the city council does not close the centre of Rome to private traffic by the end of this month he will order the police to keep cars out.

A prominent law professor says that Mr Amendola does not have the power to do so, unless he wants to accuse the mayor and the city council of "negligence of official duty." That could be what Mr Amendola has in mind.

A group of municipal traffic police, who claim that 30 per cent of their members have chronic bronchitis, have taken to appearing for duty wearing anti-smog masks. Their superiors told them to take the masks off because concealing the face violates an anti-terrorism law.

Gangs get arms from careless US army

By Mark Tran in Washington

AMERICA'S motorcycle gangs, drug-dealers, survivalists, and underground criminal elements are getting their hands on machine-guns, anti-tank rockets, grenades, and other weapons, courtesy of the US army.

The equipment, worth thousands of dollars, is being siphoned off from army bases by unscrupulous troops who know there is a ready market on civvy street. Their job is made all the easier by slipshod army practices.

"Drug-dealers take the weapons South of the Border to exchange for drugs, because they can get more than with greenbacks," said Mr Bill Livingstone, a congressional staff member dealing with the issue.

In testimony before a congressional task force, chaired by Senator Pete Wilson, a former supply sergeant with an army ranger unit, Mr Shawn Helmer, described how he spirited away $23,000 in anti-tank rockets, mines, and other hardware by just loading up his truck from an army depot.

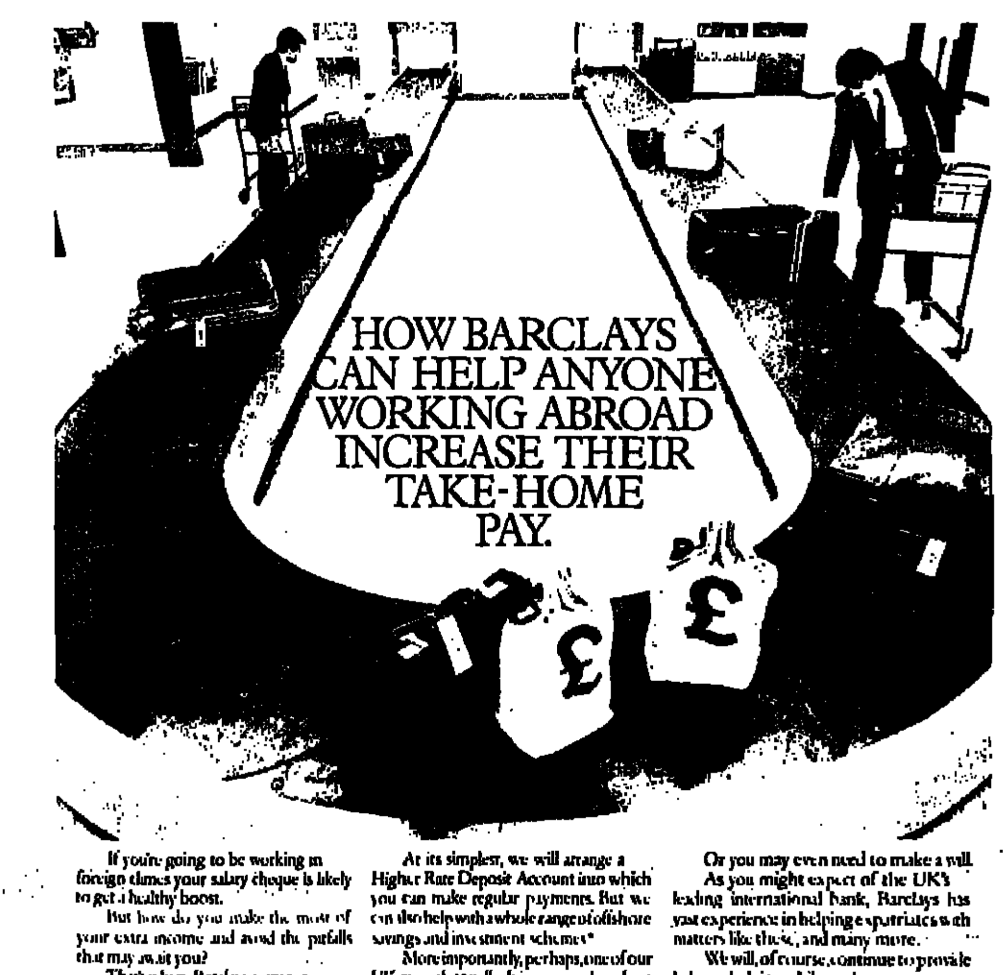
Mr Helmer was arrested last summer after trying to sell explosives to undercover police. He said that the army's ammunition supply system is so flawed that it "allowed me and others to walk away from any military installation".

The former army man, stationed at Fort Lewis, Washington, described how the stolen weapons would find a ready market in three rival gangs. Mr Helmer took his loot home to Florida with the intention of going to Central America. But he went off the idea and the arms remained in his home in Tampa.

Some of the army's troubles are of its own making. It is very hard, for example, said Mr Livingstone, for troops to return unused ammunition after a training exercise. "It can take up to four hours to get through the bureaucracy. Some people don't bother and hang on to the stuff."

Mr Helmer and other supply officials also found it easy to alter ammunition accounting records to cover stolen, misplaced or unused weapons. Mr Helmer, said Mr Livingstone, even had his own arms cache, with its own guards, at Fort Lewis, so that he could bypass the normal bureaucracy and was even complimented for it.

Mr Livingstone said that the army has taken some measures since last spring, when Senator Wilson's task force published a report giving details of the army's sloppy stocktaking. From now on the army will cut down by half the amount of ammunition and explosives to be used in exercises and will conduct more random searches on troops leaving base.



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COMMENT

City whistle-blowing is not enough

THE emerging scandals on both sides of the Atlantic involving financiers who make illegal fortunes out of "inside information" will make waves for years to come. Share prices fell earlier this week because of fears that merger mania in the US, which has helped to push share prices up, will subside sharply once denied the thrust of the deals now known to be based on inside knowledge, illegally acquired. The most dramatic example involves Mr Ivan Boesky. Instead of a New York investing genius, he turned out to be at the centre of a web of informers who tipped him off about coming takeover bids so he could buy cheap and sell dear. The risk capitalist had removed the risks. He was only found out because he was shopped by another arbitrageur, Mr Dennis Levine.

So far Whitehall and the City have come out of the latter's own mini-scandal well. The Government has brought forward its tougher powers which enable it to compel suspects to co-operate under pain of contempt of court. Morgan Grenfell has acted with commendable speed to require the resignation of Mr Geoffrey Collier, its £200,000-a-year securities director who was discovered using inside information to buy shares in a company which was the object of a take-over bid. But, as everyone in the City knows, this may be only the tip of the iceberg. As the City's activities become more internationalised, the scope and temptation for scandal will become much greater. Mr Collier (whose trade was buying and selling shares) was told by another arm of Morgan Grenfell (which advised companies on take-over bids) of an impending bid on a "need to know" basis, because of Mr Collier's expertise about valuing shares. Need to know? Surely this is a clear case of an imperative *not* to know. Unless these so-called Chinese walls separating the banking and dealing arms of City firms are not to blow away entirely, then much more needs to be done. Whistle-blowing is not enough.

The City's ability to detect rogue deals should be greatly improved later on when computers are able to scan dealings checking buyers and sellers. But as long as investors have the "freedom" to deal in nominee names, this approach will simply capture the amateurs. It will seldom be able to track down a deal originating, say, in the Cayman Islands by a completely anonymous company. If London banned dealing in nominee names, the business would simply shift elsewhere. The internationalisation of markets demands an international response in terms of policing it. A start could be made if Britain, Japan, and the United States made it illegal to engage in any new deals except where the ultimate beneficial owners are identified. It is morally repugnant to most people that the Government should spend so many resources seeking out social security scroungers and checking the credentials of the unemployed while leaving so many illegal deals in the City unchecked. To its credit, the Government is now moving fast. But it should also be drawing up contingency plans to introduce a full blooded US-style statutory system in case the City's own self policing flags and fails.

The US and the Falklands

ONE neat, but unwelcome irony. In London — an almost ritual appendage to the Speech these days — the Queen was busy "honouring" her Government's "commitments" to the people of the Falklands. In Guatemala City, meanwhile, all 31 foreign ministers from the Organisation of American States were unanimously passing a motion criticising Britain's new fishing zone around the islands for adding "another element to the existing situation of tension and potential conflict . . . over the Malvinas". UN resolutions on sovereignty were duly endorsed. Efforts at "diplomatic negotiations" by the Argentine government were fulsomely applauded. And one name amongst 31 perhaps stood out in clear relief — George Shultz, Secretary of State, the USA.

America's profound distaste for Britain's Falklands intransigence has been known for years. But the OAS resolution goes further than ever before. It endorses — pretty explicitly — Buenos Aires' claims to sovereignty over the islands. It slaps President Alfonsin on the back. And it kicks Sir Geoffrey on the knee for his fishing gambit. Anyone who thought that the British position over sovereignty and the rights of the islanders might begin eventually to make a little headway should think again. We are, in all meaningful respects alone on the issue. Our much touted superpower ally is now flatly in the opposition camp.

None of this, perhaps, matters too immediately in a world where — save for miserable accident — Britain and Argentina aren't going to war again. As long as the taxpayer is willing to pick up the tab, the Falklands can be maintained in a tolerably stable state: neither prospering nor declining. If (and when) Mrs Thatcher loses office, or retires to Dulwich, then matters may unwind somewhat. All the Opposition parties are pledged to negotiate a solution (a form of words that means negotiate about sovereignty). It is also, in truth, difficult to see any likely Tory successor in Downing Street shelling out hundreds of millions a year into this most unremunerative of enterprises. But our present Prime Minister will have nothing to do with such grey (Foreign Office) prognostications. The lady was utterly prepared to talk about sovereignty before General Galtieri's invasion but the Argentine landings, in some slightly unformulated way, appear to have wiped any of the old formulas for progress from the face of the earth — notwithstanding the self-evident facts that Galtieri is in gaol and President Alfonsin is one of the purest and most amenable democrats in South America.

Why should this be? Originally, it was said that the wounds of battle were too fresh to consider further negotiation. But time passes, scabs form, and nothing happens. Originally, it was said (by Mrs Thatcher and her then Foreign Secretary) that the islanders would be formally and fully consulted about their future. A referendum. That hasn't happened either. Westminster has had no propositions to consider. HMG's UN team has had no new arguments to put. There is only the most doleful vacuum: a refusal to shift or think, or do anything more — see the fishing affair — than react when the other side makes a minimal move. All of which would be tolerably defensible if the islanders themselves were being looked after and given the calm future that they crave. But that isn't happening either. For years the Falklanders have wanted their fisheries developed. Whitehall turned a deaf ear, and an empty purse. There's no official belief here that the islands (balefully shunned by the continent in whose shadow they live) can ever be more than an economic basket case. Equally Whitehall (because it knows the mortality of transient politicians) rcognises that one day the 1,400 or so indigenous Falklanders will be told the truth and asked to choose. In the meantime, therefore there is only a conspiracy of silence and indecision. A British government that really wanted to secure the livelihoods of the Falklanders would see Alfonsin as the best bet for settlement in modern history, and be hammering out a 25-year, 50-year, nay 100-year transition deal with him. But we seem merely to be waiting for something to turn up: and when it does, in Buenos Aires, we shall surely lament an opportunity cravenly lost.

Reagan's SDI in the Kremlin's interest

IF at the end of five years the deal on the table at Reykjavik comes about, and the US and Soviet strategic arsenals are reduced by half, the future of Britain's own deterrent as currently conceived will be even more doubtful than it is now. Certainly the if is a big one. But it clearly occupied Mrs Thatcher on her brief visit to Camp David. For the one-half reduction would be part of a two-phase programme in which ballistic missiles were eliminated entirely. But Britain's present strategy depends on American willingness to supply the Trident missile to which we add a British warhead. If the US has, in ten years' time, gone out of the ballistic business and placed its nuclear reliance elsewhere, whence comes the British deterrent?

Mrs Thatcher secured once again Mr Reagan's endorsement of the British Trident programme. What else could he say? Moreover the US will continue to modernise its own weapons until an *agreement with the Russians is signed. That would have* been the purest orthodoxy a few weeks ago, but it is not now, and there is a fault in it somewhere. If the American public is assured by the Pentagon that it can have security without its Minuteman, its MX, and its Trident, the Congress will look even more closely at projects to upgrade them. By that time the US will, saving a new President who disowns the whole concept, be even deeper into Star Wars (SDI) and the combined cost of both defensive and offensive systems will be punative.

However, the reduction or abolition of strategic forces is only part of the Reykjavik prospect. Before then comes the programme to remove altogether the intermediate-range missiles stationed in Europe. And here Mr Gorbachev is twisting the screw. Originally this was not to be linked with any surrender by the Americans of SDI, and there is no reason why it should be, because the two are unrelated. SDI does not cover either the European theatre or cruise missiles. Suddenly, however, they are linked in the Soviet drafts, and since there is no military reason why they should be, the reason must be political.

The Kremlin must know there is still mileage to be gained from the European anti-nuclear lobby. And by making not just disarmament in the large but disarmament in Europe contingent on the abandonment of SDI it is putting more pressure on European governments to distance themselves from that enterprise. That is probably a clever move. There is even less love among European scientists than among American for the extravagances of SDI, and there is a strong wish among European politicians to see the Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty (the only enduring piece of arms control) remain intact. It cannot remain intact from the moment American R&D moves out of the laboratory. Moreover even if parts of it were shown to work (and it could never be fully tested this side of Armageddon) Europe would be none the safer. The only thing going for the SDI in Europe is the contract work, which has turned out so far to be paltry. The US consistently says that Soviet policy is designed to drive a wedge between the Atlantic partners. In SDI it is providing the tools for the job.

History lives — and dies

MOST people's probable first thought on learning of the death of Vyacheslav Molotov, Stalin's foreign minister, must have been surprise that he had still been alive. Probably the only people outside Mr Molotov's inevitably sparse circle of friends and relations (he was 96) who knew he was still with us in 1986 were browsers who have happened upon his remarkable entry in the current Who's Who. Though regrettably silent on the late diplomat's hobbies and recreations, the entry (which nestles between those of a former editor of the Daily Mirror and the leader of the Ulster Unionist Party) must surely be the only one in the volume to include membership of the executive committee of the Petrograd Soviet in 1917, let alone participation in the 1905 revolution against the Tsar.

Next year's Who's Who will be the poorer for Mr Molotov's passing. The thing about his life, of course, is that its shape was distorted. He became famous while still (by some standards) fairly young, but then disappeared from public view while continuing to lead a long life. This might be called the Norma Desmond effect, after the central character in Billy Wilder's film Sunset Boulevard. It particularly affected the stars of the silent movies who failed to make the transition to fame in the talkies. In political life, however, it is more or less essential to live in a dictatorship to qualify. You need to be overthrown and, better still, disgraced. Provided that they survive premature death (not always easy in their trade), deposed politicians are the silent screen stars' only serious rivals in this regard. In a decade or so, Mr Alexander Dubcek could be a challenger (he is hampered, though, by the fact that too many people will never forget him). The same problem dogs the claims of Biafra's General Ojukwu who is not gone, but not forgotten either. And, though it hardly does to mention him in the same breath, how many people know that Mr Pierre Poujade is still very much alive and well and only 65? But with the death of Mr Molotov, the palm for the world's most famous forgotten man now probably passes to Mr Georgi Malenkov, who succeeded Stalin as ruler of the USSR in 1953 only to be promoted a few years later to manage the Ust-Kamenogorsk hydro-electric power station. Mr Malenkov, born 1901, is still among us, still in Who's Who, and gives his address (like Mr Molotov) as c/o the Ministry of Social Security in Moscow. They clearly know a thing or two about ensuring a quiet retirement there.

Pressures on the President

Continued from page 1

the NSC trusties from the office down the White House hall — are the leakproof chaps you use. Some hostages get released. Contacts are made. The hook is the inevitable one of arms shipments to a nation fighting a war.

What are you doing wrong? You are trying to save innocent lives, trying to throw the American national interest forward into the years after Khomeini, keeping it dark, because that's the only way to keep it, dreading — perhaps even thinking about the day — when some pot stirrer (an Iranian faction, an irate Syria) blows the gaffe and lands you up to your neck in political dung.

The dissection of that odiferous pile — underway as we speak — is intrinsically the case for not getting involved in the first place. Wearing your white hat, on your high moral horse, you're also the champion of laws against any trade with Tehran, the imposer of sanctions, and the dropper of bombs elsewhere in the alleged war against State-sponsored terrorism (a concept that you yourself largely invented). Whether you meant it or not, you're sending missiles to arch propagators of such terrorism in return for the promised release of a handful of men. On practical grounds the message is clear. Nab a few more Americans and more guns will flow. Lethal cause and effect.

How, at this stage, are mere onlookers (George Shultz, Margaret Thatcher, Jacques Chirac and humble newspaper readers) to assess the conflicting arguments? In fairness, the case for Reagan's defence isn't negligible. One can see how Washington, filled with tolerable intentions, stumbled down the road to fiasco. The choices at signposts along that road aren't easy ones. Nor is the instant Congressional din for power-sharing and full disclosure much more than what those Democrats would say, wouldn't they?

But it is what the President himself had to say on nationwide television that weighs heaviest in the balance; for the grim likelihood, even now, is that he didn't tell the whole truth. Denying that guns were swapped directly for lives (shades of Daniloff) sounds grotesquely disengenuous. If Mr Shamir and Mr Peres (shifting visibly in the wings) confirm that Israel as a surrogate has been pouring arms into Iran, then Mr Reagan will quite clearly seem the one thing that he has so long striven to avoid seeming: another shifty, mendacious, retreating politician in a jam. There is that hint of desperation already. Chucking more bravado denunciations of Colonel Gadafy into his TV apologia is tawdry stuff. Asserting that the "no concessions" policy remains in force is a hollow laugh. As the story unwinds, Ronald Reagan is appallingly vulnerable, the Vicar of Absolute Purity caught in bed with the curate's wife, and crying that he walked in his sleep. We move, instantly, from the shrouded world of difficult diplomatic decisions to the crude, maybe unfair, world of sweeping political perceptions. That is the world that Mr Reagan has long made his own. And it is the world that will judge him.

Le Monde ENGLISH SECTION

Speaking with forked tongue

THE KHOMEINI revolution will last only so long and the United States cannot cut itself off for good from Iran, the most important country in one of the world's most strategic regions. This, in a nutshell, is the reasoning put forward by President Reagan for justifying the resumption of contacts between Washington and Tehran and, in particular, the shipment of a "small quantity" of American arms. The secret talks conducted this summer in the Iranian capital by former White House National security adviser Robert McFarlane and the shipment of spare parts for Iranian fighter planes are an outright contradiction of Washington's official position of not negotiating with the Islamic Republic of Iran, a government that sponsors international terrorism, and imposing an embargo on all military equipment intended for either of the Gulf War belligerents.

The White House is well aware of this, and the switch had been carefully prepared by a restricted group of advisors in near-total secrecy without either Secretary of State George Shultz or Defence Secretary Caspar Weinberger being let in on what was afoot.

What does it amount to? An evaluation, stripped of ideological considerations, of a certain number of strategic realities. With its population of 45 million, vast oil and natural gas resources, a powerful army and a border hundreds of kilometres long it shares with the Soviet Union, Iran is a country that Washington cannot afford to neglect for long. True, it is still too early to resume diplomatic ties with a government which brands

COMMENT

the United States as the "Great Satan" and inflicted an unprecedented humiliation on it in 1979 when it seized American diplomats in Tehran as hostages. The American policy shift in the area is being taken very seriously by moderate Arab countries which are allies of Iraq and they have already voiced their concern.

In Tehran, the Iranian leaders are taking a more cautious line which perhaps reflects their own divided reactions to Washington's overtures. "There'll be no reconciliation with the United States," insists Iranian President Ali Khameni, "so long as it continues to be aggressive and hegemonic . . . and support the Zionist regime." But these, however, are fairly general reservations and they do not slam the door shut.

But the fact is, the White House's argument would be more convincing had it not been for the hostages. If the US media are to be believed, three shipments of arms were delivered to Iran over the past 18 months, and each time, oddly enough, an American hostage held by pro-Iranian Shi'ite fundamentalists in Lebanon was released. Reagan may have been putting his hand on his heart in swearing there had been no deal or horse trade and that his country was sticking by its unshakable determination not to negotiate with terrorism, but he just failed to convince. Congress and the press blame him for knuckling under to the hostage-takers and damaging the credibility of Washington's official stand on terrorism. And those few sanctions later announced against Syria that will not dissipate the impression that the White House is saying one thing and doing another.

(November 16/17)

USSR likely to remain in Afghanistan

A UNITED Nations report released in New York on Tuesday, November 11, considered that "the presence of foreign troops (in Afghanistan) and their participation in the conflict remains the direct cause of the intolerable suffering of the Aghan refugees," whose number it puts at over 5 millions, including the one million "uprooted persons" still inside the country). The report, drawn up by Felix Ermacora from testimony provided by refugees, does however point out that the number of civilian victims has diminished considerably this year compared with 1985.

KABUL — The hill overlooks the city. Down below can be seen the teeming commercial district of Mandai and the traffic snarls on Kabul's main modern avenue, Maiwand. The roar of the traffic with the furious honking of car horns can be heard, but here on the top of the hill everything is silent and deserted. All around as far as the eye can see are bits of calico stuck on stakes driven into the soil which flap in the breeze. Each stake is planted on a humble mound. They are the graves of the thousands of soldiers of the regular Afghan army who have fallen since 1978.

The flags are either red, in the case of members of the country's sole party (the communist Afghanistan People's Democratic Party — APDP), or green, the colour of Islam. At the entrance to this "martyrs' cemetery" only one tomb stands out by its ornateness. The headstone indicates it is that of a general who had done his military training in the United States and the Soviet Union. Eighteen months ago when he was surrounded by guerrillas in the Panjshir valley he blew himself up with dynamite rather than surrender. Ahmad Din was posthumously made a "Hero of Afghanistan" — the country's highest distinction, modelled on its Soviet counterpart, which has been awarded to only three people.

Workmen have been busy this summer cleaning and repairing one of the country's oldest and most imposing monuments — the tomb of King Nadir Shah, who died in 1933. He was the father of the last king of Afghanistan, Zahir Shah, who was deposed in 1973 and is now living in exile in Italy. Under the monarchy this was where visiting heads of state came to place wreaths. After the 1978 revolution, the monument was ransacked and allowed to go to ruin. So why repair it today?

Anxious to acquire respectability, indeed legitimacy, the Afghan government is reported to have made secret overtures to the former ruler. According to rumours

By Dominique Dhombres

flying around in Kabul — it is as much a rumour-factory as Moscow — the deposed king asked as a prerequisite that his father's tomb be made more presentable.

King Zahir Shah is hardly mentioned here, but he does not lack political soundness. He has just pointed out that he has "always" been a friend of the Soviets, but that his friendship does not extend to wanting their presence in his country. Attacks on the monarchy, which were very strong in the early years of the revolution, have ceased almost entirely.

The monarchist solution is not for the immediate future. But the very fact that the subject is discussed within the APDP itself says much for current mood in Kabul. It is an admission of defeat after more than eight years of "revolution".

In the beginning the APDP was a small party of Marxist middleclass intellectuals who were both doctrinaire by reason of their (in many cases, French) philosphical training and short-fused by their Afghan traditions. Babrak Karmal was a lawyer by profession, Soltan Ali Kechmand an economist and Mohammed Najib a physician

Almost as soon as it gained power in April 1978, the APDP alienated the rural population, which is to say, practically the entire country. The peasants confounded the militants' expectations by taking up their guns to defend their traditional chiefs against these smoothies come down from the capital who wanted to redistribute their land holdings and turn the mosques into party offices. Beset by factional quarrels that were fought out with submachine-guns, in a matter of months the APDP showed it was incapable of holding, let alone managing, a country that was 80 per cent rural, Muslim and illiterate.

The party's more doctrinaire members wanted Soviet intervention. They got it even before actually asking for it, and the civil war, now combined with a foreign occupation, has dragged on ever since. The pioneer militants — physicians, lawyers and teachers — acknowledge the mistakes that were made and make no secret of their dissatisfaction.

Party Secretary Mikhail Gorbachev's arrival in the Kremlin has drastically changed the situation. Unlike his predecessors, who were too old and too tired to take a personal interest in the problem, Gorbachev quickly came to the conclusion that Babrak Karmal was incapable of bringing about peace and winning the war at the same time. Meanwhile, the Soviet army had not succeeded in winning the war either.

All this is tied in with the March congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union. The drawn features of the man the Soviets took with them and installed in Kabul in December 1979 were a sufficient indication of the ordeal he was suffering. Gorbachev and the CPSU's No 2 man, Yegor Ligachev, criticised Karmal for trying to apply the Marxist model "mechanically" in a country that

Continued on page 14

Lomé dominated by Chad fighting

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LOME — Apart from Chad, several other subjects were examined at the conference, but they were such recurring topics like southern Africa, sub-Saharan Africa's economic plight and the African debt. The changes in the Chadian situation, confirmed by President Mitterrand in a Radio France Internationale interview on Wednesday last week, were underlined even more sharply by the President two days later. What he said was very significant as he has been keeping close watch on the situation and his remarks are always extremely cautious.

What he said in effect was that the character of the Chadian conflict has changed. It is in the process of turning from civil war into an international dispute involving two states. The world, he said, would soon be able to see clearly "where precisely are the origins of a dispute which has today become international."

Short of naming it, he could not have referred more clearly to Libya. And this when, on this same day, Hissène Habré filed a complaint against Libya with the United Nations Security Council.

Both the President's and the Prime Minister's aides acknowledge in private that Mitterrand's analysis implies a distinct change in French policy which must now adapt itself to the new reality on the ground. Now the change in the balance of power is becoming increasingly evident to French intelligence services which roughly confirm what Hissène Habré and his allies are saying. More and more of the nomads living north of the 16th parallel are now rallying to N'Djamena, and the figure is said to represent a good quarter of the 150,000 Chadians in the north. There is even talk of 40,000 presumed followers of Goukouni Oueddei (who rebelled against N'Djamena) who are reported to have switched their allegiance to Habré. This would represent between 2,000 and 3,000 fighters, as they always move around with their households.

Determined to demonstrate it understands Habré, Paris is believed to have agreed to send additional assistance. This would include light weapons, communications equipment, humanitarian and medical aid (especially field medical units), uniforms and so on. All this means that France has given Habré the green light to carry out a several quick strikes well across the 16th parallel to make contact with Goukouni's followers, provide them with munitions and help the civilian population hard hit by recent Libyan bomb attacks.

The plan worked out by Paris and N'Djamena has the advantage for France of averting the necessity of providing air cover for Habré's forces at this juncture, something that neither Mitterrand nor Chirac at present wants. The Libyan forces present in northern Chad may after all be weaker than they appear and will have a hard time standing up to the Goukounists when they round on them. Especially as they have come far from their rear bases, carrying with them a number of Libyan arms, including doubtless Sam-7 missiles. It seems that it is with such a missile that on Thursday a Libyan Marchetti plane was downed. Already more combative, those fighters should be strengthened in their new conviction by the French military aid channelled through N'Djamena.

It seems a reasonable enough calculation considering that the Libyan army's morale is said to be low. Nevertheless, it does involve a few risks for France particularly Colonel Gadafy decides to go for broke and accept the challenge instead to waiting to see what way out Paris might propose, even if Hissène Habré, whose power is said to be growing, is doubtless in no mind to grant him any.

On the other hand, politically, nobody is taking seriously the communique published on Friday by five factions hostile to Habré in which they announced that Goukouni Oueddei had been stripped of his authority and that the leadership had been transferred to Mohammed Issa, a man known to be working for the Libyans.

But in the already long list of Lomé conferences, this one could well go down as an important one in the Chadian case, which is certainly full of surprising developments. The central figure of the two-day conference was Hissène Habré, who remains as discreet as ever, to the point of remoteness, and is literally possessed by his conviction that Chad does exist, since he is in the process of creating it.

Other figures also contributed to the conference, of course, but their roles were more mixed. Félix Houphouët-Boigny, patently tired and anxious to show that he was still refusing to have anything to do with Mitterrand, whom he blames for allowing (the French daily) Le Matin and (the Socialist Party) publication L'Unité to write things about him that are usually not aired. The two men did indeed meet for about a quarter of an hour, but the Ivory Coast leader did not appear at any of the banquets and preferred to retire to Yamoussoukro on Friday afternoon, where he met Jacques Chirac the following evening. Chirac never ceased to reiterate his admiration for the "wise old man of Africa"

One last point whose effects it is still too early to evaluate — the idea of a Marshall plan for the countries of the south. The proposal was made by Eyedema and taken up by Mitterrand who noted that 1987 would be the 40th anniversary of the European Marshall Plan which did so much to reactivate European industry after the end of the second world war. The question is whether the idea will go any farther than Lomé. Is it realistic to imagine the countries of the North feeling a sense of solidarity with the countries of the South similar to the way the United States reacted towards Europe at the end of the war?

(November 16/17)

By Jacques Amalric

COMMENT

City whistle-blowing is not enough

THE emerging scandals on both sides of the Atlantic involving financiers who make illegal fortunes out of "inside information" will make waves for years to come. Share prices fell earlier this week because of fears that merger mania in the US, which has helped to push share prices up, will subside sharply once denied the thrust of the deals now known to be based on inside knowledge, illegally acquired. The most dramatic example involves Mr Ivan Boesky. Instead of a New York investing genius, he turned out to be at the centre of a web of informers who tipped him off about coming takeover bids so he could buy cheap and sell dear. The risk capitalist had removed the risks. He was only found out because he was shopped by another arbitrageur, Mr Dennis Levine.

So far Whitehall and the City have come out of the latter's own mini-scandal well. The Government has brought forward its tougher powers which enable it to compel suspects to co-operate under pain of contempt of court. Morgan Grenfell has acted with commendable speed to require the resignation of Mr Geoffrey Collier, its £200,000-a-year securities director who was discovered using inside information to buy shares in a company which was the object of a take-over bid. But, as everyone in the City knows, this may be only the tip of the iceberg. As the City's activities become more internationalised, the scope and temptation for scandal will become much greater. Mr Collier (whose trade was buying and selling shares) was told by another arm of Morgan Grenfell (which advised companies on take-over bids) of an impending bid on a "need to know" basis, because of Mr Collier's expertise about valuing shares. Need to know? Surely this is a clear case of an imperative *not* to know. Unless these so-called Chinese walls separating the banking and dealing arms of City firms are not to blow away entirely, then much more needs to be done. Whistle-blowing is not enough.

The City's ability to detect rogue deals should be greatly improved later on when computers are able to scan dealings checking buyers and sellers. But as long as investors have the "freedom" to deal in nominee names, this approach will simply capture the amateurs. It will seldom be able to track down a deal originating, say, in the Cayman Islands by a completely anonymous company. If London banned dealing in nominee names, the business would simply shift elsewhere. The internationalisation of markets demands an international response in terms of policing it. A start could be made if Britain, Japan, and the United States made it illegal to engage in any new deals except where the ultimate beneficial owners are identified. It is morally repugnant to most people that the Government should spend so many resources seeking out social security scroungers and checking the credentials of the unemployed while leaving so many illegal deals in the City unchecked. To its credit, the Government is now moving fast. But it should also be drawing up contingency plans to introduce a full blooded US-style statutory system in case the City's own self policing flags and fails.

Reagan's SDI in the Kremlin's interest

IF at the end of five years the deal on the table at Reykjavik comes about, and the US and Soviet strategic arsenals are reduced by half, the future of Britain's own deterrent as currently conceived will be even more doubtful than it is now. Certainly the if is a big one. But it clearly occupied Mrs Thatcher on her brief visit to Camp David. For the one-half reduction would be part of a two-phase programme in which ballistic missiles were eliminated entirely. But Britain's present strategy depends on American willingness to supply the Trident missile to which we add a British warhead. If the US has, in ten years' time, gone out of the ballistic business and placed its nuclear reliance elsewhere, whence comes the British deterrent?

Mrs Thatcher secured once again Mr Reagan's endorsement of the British Trident programme. What else could he say? Moreover the US will continue to modernise its own weapons until an agreement with the Russians is signed. That would have been the purest orthodoxy a few weeks ago, but it is not now, and there is a fault in it somewhere. If the American public is assured by the Pentagon that it can have security without its Minuteman, its MX, and its Trident, the Congress will look even more closely at projects to upgrade them. By that time the US will, saving a new President who disowns the whole concept, be even deeper into Star Wars (SDI) and the combined cost of both defensive and offensive systems will be punative.

However, the reduction or abolition of strategic forces is only part of the Reykjavik prospect. Before then comes the programme to remove altogether the intermediate-range missiles stationed in Europe. And here Mr Gorbachev is twisting the screw. Originally this was not to be linked with any surrender by the Americans of SDI, and there is no reason why it should be, because the two are unrelated. SDI does not cover either the European theatre or cruise missiles. Suddenly, however, they are linked in the Soviet drafts, and since there is no military reason why they should be, the reason must be political.

The Kremlin must know there is still mileage to be gained from the European anti-nuclear lobby. And by making not just disarmament in the large but disarmament in Europe contingent on the abandonment of SDI it is putting more pressure on European governments to distance themselves from that enterprise. That is probably a clever move. There is even less love among European scientists than among American for the extravagances of SDI, and there is a strong wish among European politicians to see the Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty (the only enduring piece of arms control) remain intact. It cannot remain intact from the moment American R&D moves out of the laboratory. Moreover even if parts of it were shown to work (and it could never be fully tested this side of Armageddon) Europe would be none the safer. The only thing going for the SDI in Europe is the contract work, which has turned out so far to be paltry. The US consistently says that Soviet policy is designed to drive a wedge between the Atlantic partners. In SDI it is providing the tools for the job.

History lives — and dies

MOST people's probable first thought on learning of the death of Vyacheslav Molotov, Stalin's foreign minister, must have been surprise that he had still been alive. Probably the only people outside Mr Molotov's inevitably sparse circle of friends and relations (he was 96) who knew he was still with us in 1986 were browsers who have happened upon his remarkable entry in the current Who's Who. Though regrettably silent on the late diplomat's hobbies and recreations, the entry (which nestles between those of a former editor of the Daily Mirror and the leader of the Ulster Unionist Party) must surely be the only one in the volume to include membership of the executive committee of the Petrograd Soviet in 1917, let alone participation in the 1905 revolution against the Tsar.

Next year's Who's Who will be the poorer for Mr Molotov's passing. The thing about his life, of course, is that its shape was distorted. He became famous while still (by some standards) fairly young, but then disappeared from public view while continuing to lead a long life. This might be called the Norma Desmond effect, after the central character in Billy Wilder's film Sunset Boulevard. It particularly affected the stars of the silent movies who failed to make the transition to fame in the talkies. In political life, however, it is more or less essential to live in a dictatorship to qualify. You need to be overthrown and, better still, disgraced. Provided that they survive premature death (not always easy in their trade), deposed politicians are the silent screen stars' only serious rivals in this regard. In a decade or so, Mr Alexander Dubcek could be a challenger (he is hampered, though, by the fact that too many people will never forget him). The same problem dogs the claims of Biafra's General Ojukwu who is not gone, but not forgotten either. And, though it hardly does to mention him in the same breath, how many people know that Mr Pierre Poujade is still very much alive and well and only 65? But with the death of Mr Molotov, the palm for the world's most famous forgotten man now probably passes to Mr Georgi Malenkov, who succeeded Stalin as ruler of the USSR in 1953 only to be promoted a few years later to manage the Ust-Kamenogorsk hydro-electric power station. Mr Malenkov, born 1901, is still among us, still in Who's Who, and gives his address (like Mr Molotov) as c/o the Ministry of Social Security in Moscow. They clearly know a thing or two about ensuring a quiet retirement there.

Pressures on the President

Continued from page 1

the NSC trusties from the office down the White House hall — are the leakproof chaps you use. Some hostages get released. Contacts are made. The hook is the inevitable one of arms shipments to a nation fighting a war.

What are you doing wrong? You are trying to save innocent lives, trying to throw the American national interest forward into the years after Khomeini, keeping it dark, because that's the only way to keep it, dreading — perhaps even thinking about the day — when some pot stirrer (an Iranian faction, an irate Syria) blows the gaffe and lands you up to your neck in political dung.

The dissection of that odiferous pile — underway as we speak — is intrinsically the case for not getting involved in the first place. Wearing your white hat, on your high moral horse, you're also the champion of laws against any trade with Tehran, the imposer of sanctions, and the dropper of bombs elsewhere in the alleged war against State-sponsored terrorism (a concept that you yourself largely invented). Whether you meant it or not, you're sending missiles to arch propagators of such terrorism in return for the promised release of a handful of men. On practical grounds the message is clear. Nab a few more Americans and more guns will flow. Lethal cause and effect.

How, at this stage, are mere onlookers (George Shultz, Margaret Thatcher, Jacques Chirac and humble newspaper readers) to assess the conflicting arguments? In fairness, the case for Reagan's defence isn't negligible. One can see how Washington, filled with tolerable intentions, stumbled down the road to fiasco. The choices at signposts along that road aren't easy ones. Nor is the instant Congressional din for power-sharing and full disclosure much more than what those Democrats would say, wouldn't they?

But it is what the President himself had to say on nationwide television that weighs heaviest in the balance; for the grim likelihood, even now, is that he didn't tell the whole truth. Denying that guns were swapped directly for lives (shades of Daniloff) sounds grotesquely disengenuous. If Mr Shamir and Mr Peres (shifting visibly in the wings) confirm that Israel as a surrogate has been pouring arms into Iran, then Mr Reagan will quite clearly seem the one thing that he has so long striven to avoid seeming: another shifty, mendacious, retreating politician in a jam. There is that hint of desperation already. Chucking more bravado denunciations of Colonel Gadafy into his TV apologia is tawdry stuff. Asserting that the "no concessions" policy remains in force is a hollow laugh. As the story unwinds, Ronald Reagan is appallingly vulnerable, the Vicar of Absolute Purity caught in bed with the curate's wife, and crying that he walked in his sleep. We move, instantly, from the shrouded world of difficult diplomatic decisions to the crude, maybe unfair, world of sweeping political perceptions. That is the world that Mr Reagan has long made his own. And it is the world that will judge him.

The US and the Falklands

ONE neat, but unwelcome irony. In London — an almost ritual appendage to the Speech these days — the Queen was busy "honouring" her Government's "commitments" to the people of the Falklands. In Guatemala City, meanwhile, all 31 foreign ministers from the Organisation of American States were unanimously passing a motion criticising Britain's new fishing zone around the islands for adding "another element to the existing situation of tension and potential conflict . . . over the Malvinas". UN resolutions on sovereignty were duly endorsed. Efforts at "diplomatic negotiations" by the Argentine government were fulsomely applauded. And one name amongst 31 perhaps stood out in clear relief — George Shultz, Secretary of State, the USA.

America's profound distaste for Britain's Falklands intransigence has been known for years. But the OAS resolution goes further than ever before. It endorses — pretty explicitly — Buenos Aires' claims to sovereignty over the islands. It slaps President Alfonsin on the back. And it kicks Sir Geoffrey on the knee for his fishing gambit. Anyone who thought that the British position over sovereignty and the rights of the islanders might begin eventually to make a little headway should think again. We are, in all meaningful respects, alone on the issue. Our much touted superpower ally is now flatly in the opposition camp.

None of this, perhaps, matters too immediately in a world where — save for miserable accident — Britain and Argentina aren't going to war again. As long as the taxpayer is willing to pick up the tab, the Falklands can be maintained in a tolerably stable state: neither prospering nor declining. If (and when) Mrs Thatcher loses office, or retires to Dulwich, then matters may unwind somewhat. All the Opposition parties are pledged to negotiate a solution (a form of words that means negotiate about sovereignty). It is also, in truth, difficult to see any likely Tory successor in Downing Street shelling out hundreds of millions a year into this most unremunerative of enterprises. But our present Prime Minister will have nothing to do with such grey (Foreign Office) prognostications. The lady was utterly prepared to talk about sovereignty before General Galtieri's invasion but the Argentine landings, in some slightly unformulated way, appear to have wiped any of the old formulas for progress from the face of the earth — notwithstanding the self-evident facts that Galtieri is in gaol and President Alfonsin is one of the purest and most amenable democrats in South America.

Why should this be? Originally, it was said that the wounds of battle were too fresh to consider further negotiation. But time passes, scabs form, and nothing happens. Originally, it was said (by Mrs Thatcher and her then Foreign Secretary) that the islanders would be formally and fully consulted about their future. A referendum. That hasn't happened either. Westminster has had no propositions to consider. HMG's UN team has had no new arguments to put. There is only the most doleful vacuum: a refusal to shift or think, or do anything more — see the fishing affair — than react when the other side makes a minimal move. All of which would be tolerably defensible if the islanders themselves were being looked after and given the calm future that they crave. But that isn't happening either. For years the Falklanders have wanted their fisheries developed. Whitehall turned a deaf ear, and an empty purse. There's no official belief here that the islands (balefully shunned by the continent in whose shadow they live) can ever be more than an economic basket case. Equally Whitehall (because it knows the mortality of transient politicians) recognises that one day the 1,400 or so indigenous Falklanders will be told the truth and asked to choose. In the meantime, therefore there is only a conspiracy of silence and indecision. A British government that really wanted to secure the livelihoods of the Falklanders would see Alfonsin as the best bet for settlement in modern history, and be hammering out a 25-year, 50-year, nay 100-year transition deal with him. But we seem merely to be waiting for something to turn up: and when it does, in Buenos Aires, we shall surely lament an opportunity cravenly lost.

Le Monde ENGLISH SECTION

Speaking with forked tongue

THE KHOMEINI revolution will last only so long and the United States cannot cut itself off for good from Iran, the most important country in one of the world's most strategic regions. This, in a nutshell, is the reasoning put forward by President Reagan for justifying the resumption of contacts between Washington and Tehran and, in particular, the shipment of a "small quantity" of American arms. The secret talks conducted this summer in the Iranian capital by former White House National security adviser Robert McFarlane and the shipment of spare parts for Iranian fighter planes are an outright contradiction of Washington's official position of not negotiating with the Islamic Republic of Iran, a government that sponsors international terrorism, and imposing an embargo on all military equipment intended for either of the Gulf War belligerents.

The White House is well aware of this, and the switch had been carefully prepared by a restricted group of advisers in near-total secrecy without either Secretary of State George Shultz or Defence Secretary Caspar Weinberger being let in on what was afoot.

What does it amount to? An evaluation, stripped of ideological considerations, of a certain number of strategic realities. With its population of 45 million, vast oil and natural gas resources, a powerful army and a border hundreds of kilometres long it shares with the Soviet Union, Iran is a country that Washington cannot afford to neglect for long. True, it is still too early to resume diplomatic ties with a government which brands

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the United States as the "Great Satan" and inflicted an unprecedented humiliation on it in 1979 when it seized American diplomats in Tehran as hostages. The American policy shift in the area is being taken very seriously by moderate Arab countries which are allies of Iraq and they have already voiced their concern.

In Tehran, the Iranian leaders are taking a more cautious line which perhaps reflects their own divided reactions to Washington's overtures. "There'll be no reconciliation with the United States," insists Iranian President Ali Khameni, "so long as it continues to be aggressive and hegemonic . . . and support the Zionist regime." But these, however, are fairly general reservations and they do not slam the door shut.

But the fact is, the White House's argument would be more convincing had it not been for the hostages. If the US media are to be believed, three shipments of arms were delivered to Iran over the past 18 months, and each time, oddly enough, an American hostage held by pro-Iranian Shi'ite fundamentalists in Lebanon was released. Reagan may have been putting his hand on his heart in swearing there had been no deal or horse trade and that his country was sticking by its unshakable determination not to negotiate with terrorism, but he just failed to convince. Congress and the press blame him for knuckling under to the hostage-takers and damaging the credibility of Washington's official stand on terrorism. And those few sanctions later announced against Syria that will not dissipate the impression that the White House is saying one thing and doing another.

(November 16/17)

USSR likely to remain in Afghanistan

A UNITED Nations report released in New York on Tuesday, November 11, considered that "the presence of foreign troops (in Afghanistan) and their participation in the conflict remains the direct cause of the intolerable suffering of the Aghan refugees," whose number it puts at over 5 millions, including the one million "uprooted persons" still inside the country). The report, drawn up by Felix Ermacora from testimony provided by refugees, does however point out that the number of civilian victims has diminished considerably this year compared with 1985.

KABUL — The hill overlooks the city. Down below can be seen the teeming commercial district of Mandai and the traffic snarls on Kabul's main modern avenue, Maiwand. The roar of the traffic with the furious honking of car horns can be heard, but here on the top of the hill everything is silent and deserted. All around as far as the eye can see are bits of calico stuck on stakes driven into the soil which flap in the breeze. Each stake is planted on a humble mound. They are the graves of the thousands of soldiers of the regular Afghan army who have fallen since 1978.

The flags are either red, in the case of members of the country's sole party (the communist Afghanistan People's Democratic Party — APDP), or green, the colour of Islam. At the entrance to this "martyrs' cemetery" only one tomb stands out by its ornateness. The headstone indicates it is that of a general who had done his military training in the United States and the Soviet Union. Eighteen months ago when he was surrounded by guerrillas in the Panjshir valley he blew himself up with dynamite rather than surrender. Ahmad Din was posthumously made a "Hero of Afghanistan" — the country's highest distinction, modelled on its Soviet counterpart, which has been awarded to only three people.

Workmen have been busy this summer cleaning and repairing one of the country's oldest and most imposing monuments — the tomb of King Nadir Shah, who died in 1933. He was the father of the last king of Afghanistan, Zahir Shah, who was deposed in 1973 and is now living in exile in Italy. Under the monarchy this was where visiting heads of state came to place wreaths. After the 1978 revolution, the monument was ransacked and allowed to go to ruin. So why repair it today?

Anxious to acquire respectability, indeed legitimacy, the Afghan government is reported to have made secret overtures to the former ruler. According to rumours

By Dominique Dhombres

flying around in Kabul — it is as much a rumour-factory as Moscow — the deposed king asked as a prerequisite that his father's tomb be made more presentable.

King Zahir Shah is hardly mentioned here, but he does not lack political [illegible]. He has just pointed out that he has "always" been a friend of the Soviets, but that his friendship does not extend to wanting their presence in his country. Attacks on the monarchy, which were very strong in the early years of the revolution, have ceased almost entirely.

The monarchist solution is not for the immediate future. But the very fact that the subject is discussed within the APDP itself says much for current mood in Kabul. It is an admission of defeat after more than eight years of "revolution".

In the beginning the APDP was a small party of Marxist middleclass intellectuals who were both doctrinaire by reason of their (in many cases, French) philosphical training and short-fused by their Afghan traditions. Babrak Karmal was a lawyer by profession, Sultan Ali Kechtmand an economist and Mohammed Najib a physician.

Almost as soon as it gained power in April 1978, the APDP alienated the rural population, which is to say, practically the entire country. The peasants confounded the militants' expectations by taking up their guns to defend their traditional chiefs against these smoothies come down from the capital who wanted to redistribute their land holdings and turn the mosques into party offices. Beset by factional quarrels that were fought out with submachine-guns, in a matter of months the APDP showed it was incapable of holding, let alone managing, a country that was 80 per cent rural, Muslim and illiterate.

The party's more doctrinaire members wanted Soviet intervention. They got it even before actually asking for it, and the civil war, now combined with a foreign occupation, has dragged on ever since. The pioneer militants — physicians, lawyers and teachers — acknowledge the mistakes that were made and make no secret of their dissatisfaction.

Party Secretary Mikhail Gorbachev's arrival in the Kremlin has drastically changed the situation. Unlike his predecessors, who were too old and too tired to take a personal interest in the problem, Gorbachev quickly came to the conclusion that Babrak Karmal was incapable of bringing about peace and winning the war at the same time. Meanwhile, the Soviet army had not succeeded in winning the war either.

All this is tied in with the March congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union. The drawn features of the man the Soviets took with them and installed in Kabul in December 1979 were a sufficient indication of the ordeal he was suffering. Gorbachev and the CPSU's No 2 man, Yegor Ligachev, criticised Karmal for trying to apply the Marxist model "mechanically" in a country that

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Lomé dominated by Chad fighting

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said, would soon be able to see clearly "where precisely are the origins of a dispute which has today become international."

Short of naming it, he could not have referred more clearly to Libya. And this when, on this same day, Hissène Habré filed a complaint against Libya with the United Nations Security Council.

Both the President's and the Prime Minister's aides acknowledge in private that Mitterrand's analysis implies a distinct change in French policy which must now adapt itself to the new reality on the ground. Now the change in the balance of power is becoming increasingly evident to French intelligence services which roughly confirm what Hissène Habré and his allies are saying. More and more of the nomads living north of the 16th parallel are now rallying to N'Djamena, and the figure is said to represent a good quarter of the 150,000 Chadians in the north. There is even talk of 40,000 presumed followers of Goukouni Oueddei (who rebelled against N'Djamena) who are reported to have switched their allegiance to Habré. This would represent between 2,000 and 3,000 fighters, as they always move around with their households.

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The plan worked out by Paris and N'Djamena has the advantage for France of averting the necessity of providing air cover for Habré's forces at this juncture, something that neither Mitterrand nor Chirac at present wants. The Libyan forces present in northern Chad may after all be weaker than they appear and will have a hard time standing up to the Goukounists when they round on them. Especially as they have come far from their rear bases, carrying with them a number of Libyan arms, including doubtless Sam-7 missiles. It seems that it is with such a missile that on Thursday a Libyan Marchetti plane was downed. Already more combative, these fighters should be strengthened in their new conviction by the French military aid channelled through N'Djamena.

It seems a reasonable enough calculation considering that the Libyan army's morale is said to be low. Nevertheless, it does involve a few risks for France particularly Colonel Gadafy decides to go for broke and accept the challenge instead to waiting to see what way out Paris might propose, even if Hissène Habré, whose power is said to be growing, is doubtless in no mind to grant him any.

On the other hand, politically, nobody is taking seriously the communiqué published on Friday by five factions hostile to Habré in which they announced that Goukouni Oueddei had been stripped of his authority and that the leadership had been transferred to Mohammed Issa, a man known to be working for the Libyans.

But in the already long list of Lomé conferences, this one could well go down as an important one in the Chadian case, which is certainly full of surprising developments. The central figure of the two-day conference was Hissène Habré, who remains as discreet as ever, to the point of remoteness, and is literally possessed by his conviction that Chad does exist, since he is in the process of creating it.

Other figures also contributed to the conference, of course, but their roles were more mixed. Félix Houphouët-Boigny, patently tired and anxious to show that he was still refusing to have anything to do with Mitterrand, whom he blames for allowing (the French daily) Le Matin and (the Socialist Party) publication L'Unité to write things about him that are usually not aired. The two men did indeed meet for about a quarter of an hour, but the Ivory Coast leader did not appear at any of the banquets and preferred to retire to Yamoussoukro on Friday afternoon, where he met Jacques Chirac the following evening. Chirac never ceased to reiterate his admiration for the "wise old man of Africa"

One last point whose effects it is still too early to evaluate — the idea of a Marshall plan for the countries of the south. The proposal was made by Eyedema and taken up by Mitterrand who noted that 1987 would be the 40th anniversary of the European Marshall Plan which did so much to reactivate European industry after the end of the second world war. The question is whether the idea will go any farther than Lomé. Is it realistic to imagine the countries of the North feeling a sense of solidarity with the countries of the South similar to the way the United States reacted towards Europe at the end of the war?

(November 16/17)

Chemical spill leaves Rhine in disastrous state

By Roger Cans

A fire on November 1 at the Basle chemical plant of the Swiss firm Sandoz has caused massive pollution of the Rhine. Two waves of highly poisonous substances that drained into the Rhine killed tens of thousands of fish (the figure of half a million has been mentioned), especially eels, and forced several towns along the upper reaches of the river to take emergency measures to secure alternative sources of drinking water.

Sandoz has acknowledged its responsibility in the pollution and ordered all its subsidiaries to tighten safety precautions at their plants. The measure was appropriate as West German Environment Minister Walter Wallman had accused the Basle firm of breaking safety regulations. Since 1977, the firm has been "illegally" storing chemical products on premises intended for machinery, according to Sandoz's insurers. This breach of regulations was admitted in Berne by an official of the Swiss Federal Office of Environment Protection who considered that several clauses of Swiss legislation had been infringed.

BASLE — Ten days after the All Saints' Day fire, the Sandoz plant at Schweizerhalle is still a battlefield. Stacks of barrels rusted by fire and water, fire-damaged plastic sacks half-filled with white paste, floor reddened by dyes, and all this trapped in a tangle of crumpled metal girders. Workmen wearing gas masks and perched precariously on shaky remnants of the roof were trying to take down the asbestos roofing. Others, lifted up in pods by huge cranes, were cutting through girders with torches under the watchful eye of firemen who stood by ready to put out any new blaze. An acrid throat-grabbing stench hung over the whole place.

"We worked Saturday and Sunday," said a man who was helping out. He had come over on a bicycle. This is how people move around the 40 hectares (98.8 acres) of the Schweizerhalle Sandoz plant which specialised in the manufacture of insecticides, fungicides, herbicides and other agricultural toxins. (The other Sandoz plant is right in the centre of Basle: it manufactures mainly dyes and medical drugs).

The sun was shining brightly on this morning of November 10, so there was no fear that more liquids would drain off into the Rhine as a result of untimely rain. "Friday's leakage of mercury was caused by a fractured pipe," explained Jean-Jacques Salzmann, head of Safety and Environment Protection, who had rushed back from the United States when he heard of the fire. "We had stoppered the pipe with a 3-cm thick plastic bung, but it popped under the pressure of the water. This time we poured in a 30-cm thick plastic plug."

So there should be no more chemical run-off flowing into the Rhine, unless the rain gets into the act. "We have a retention wall around the plant," Salzmann hastened to add. "It could not hold back the 25 cubic metres of water per minute that the firemen were pumping over the other buildings to protect them. But it is sufficient to hold back normal run-off."

A Basle fireboat was patrolling the Rhine in the neighbourhood of the three effluent conduits of the Sandoz plant, and men wearing black suits and gas masks kept taking regular samplings of the water which were carefully sealed in bottles for later analysis. The samples are sent to the central laboratory of the Zurich police which is conducting the analyses and the inquiry into the fire. It is still not known whether the blaze was caused by an electrical short circuit, a chemical reaction or arson.

More urgent, however, is an evaluation of the danger of the pollution and the risk to people's health. The chemical fumes caused by the fire appear to have produced nothing more serious than irritation as a result of the sulphur contents of the phosphoric acid esters (derivatives of thiol). The farms around the plant have not been damaged. Horses continue to graze in the meadows and rabbits can be seen frolicking about between the hedges. The hundreds of tons of chemicals which went up in smoke have therefore caused less damage than the few dozen tons of liquids that ran off into the Rhine.



Drawing by Plantu

For the fact is, the "base products washed into the Rhine are far more deadly than any insecticides found on the market," noted Alfred Exinger, an organic and therapeutic chemistry expert and head of the hydrological laboratory in Strasbourg University's faculty of pharmacy. He considered the tons of disulfuton and thiometon to be far more dangerous "in the short term" for the Rhine's flora and fauna than the mercury. The fact that fishes were killed immediately cannot be attributed to this mercury which must not be confused with the deadly methylmercury that killed 230 people in Japan in 1956 (Minamata) and left its traces in over 10,000 others. The eels, which live on the riverbed where the heavy compounds descended, might have been killed quite simply by the chemicals coming into contact with their scale-free skins.

"All drinking water is drawn from the phreatic layer at a depth varying from 15 to 80 metres," explained Gilles Rinck, hydrogeologist of the Geological and Mining Research Bureau, "and the catchment points are too far from the Rhine to be polluted. "It's a disaster," says Plobsheim (Bas-Rhin) water bailiff Georges Siegel. "The Rhine's water was just beginning to improve. Even sea trout were seen migrating upstream.

As a matter of fact, the prefect has just placed a six-month ban on angling in the Rhine and its direct tributaries. "The old Rhine is not going to become clean overnight," commented the owner of a fishing tackle shop. He agreed that only bottom-feeding fish had been killed so far, but asked: "What'll happen to the others when there's nothing left for them to eat?"

The Germans are taking a stricter view of things. "Ninety-five per cent of the effluents going into the Rhine are highly toxic," said Walter Littke, a distinguished chemist at the University of Freiburg im Breisgau who is working with the US National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) on growing protein crystals in space. "Even Prussian blue can decompose into cyanide." He was particularly angry at the attitude of industrialists: "When I make a mistake in my calculations, I warn everybody. But the people at Sandoz say nothing. They're very arrogant."

Sandoz spokesmen point out, however, that the list of products stocked in the burnt-out warehouse was supplied to the Bas-Rhin and Haut-Rhin prefects as early as November 3. "Nothing was completely burned out. It is therefore a mix of chemicals which does not allow us to make any proper simulation. We are reduced to collecting filters of gas masks and airconditioning units and extracting their contents to establish a reliable spectrum."

Sandoz helpless? Perhaps. But Swiss chemists are notoriously discreet, not to say secretive. It was German scientists at Offenburg who tipped off their counterparts in Strasbourg when they read the levels of their mass spectrometric recordings. The French authorities are much too reassured by analyses of their drinking water to ask any embarrassing questions, even though the Schweizerhalle checklist has still not been completed and the French Environment Minister is pointing out the seriousness of the pollution.

(November 12)

1247 metric tons of chemicals destroyed.

They are:

- **Insecticides (phosphorous esters, including 323 tons of disulfuton and thiometon): 824 tonnes**
- **herbicides (nitrophenol): 71 tonnes**
- **fungicides (ethoxyethyl hydroxide of mercury and oxazolidine): 39 tonnes**
- **emulsifiers: 23 tonnes**
- **Prussian blue: 10 tonnes**
- **solvent: 4 tonnes**

When other less toxic substances are added to this list, the grand total of chemical products completely or partly destroyed in the fire comes to 1,246 tonnes.

COMMENT

India puts squeeze on Sri Lankan Tamils

Hundreds of Tamils from Sri Lanka were arrested on Saturday, November 8, in a police swoop through the South Indian state of Tamil Nadu. Several top guerrilla leaders were placed under house arrest the next day. Among them were two prominent heads of the biggest insurgent group, the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam. They were named as Velupillai Prabhakaran, the leading guerrilla tactician; and the group's spokesman and theoretician, Anton Balasingham.

FOR THE first time since 1983, when they took up residence in Tamil Nadu, inhabited by people of the same racial group and only two hours by sea from their island, Tamil guerrilla insurgents from Sri Lanka have been given a severe warning by the Indian authorities. Their principal leaders as well as some one hundred of their followers were arrested, disarmed and put on file. The police also occupied several of their arms and munitions depots. However much the central government in New Delhi may deny any responsibility in the matter — "Law and order in the State of Tamil Nadu as in the other states of the Union are the exclusive responsibility of the state authorities," explained an official spokesman — it is clear that the federated government of Madras, which is a political ally of Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi, acted with the capital's wholehearted approval.

The guerrilla leaders, who have since practically been put under house arrest, were naturally quick to accuse New Delhi of seeking to "appease" the government of Colombo, and this they argued was likely "to encourage the Sinhalese authorities to continue the genocide of the Tamil minority." But they must have realised that the operation was facilitated by the fact that relations have recently gone from bad to worse between them (there are roughly 120,000 Sri Lankan Tamil refugees in Tamil Nadu) and the 50 million or so distant "cousins" who have offered them hospitality.

The police swoop could also be justified on security grounds, as a top-level meeting of heads of state is due to take place on November 17 in Bangalore, Karnataka, the state next door to Tamil Nadu. And Bangalore is only a hundred kilometres from some of the Tamil guerrilla training bases.

The fact is, while "categorically" denying such an interpretation, the New Delhi government has signalled to the Tamil separatists that its patience is running out and that they would do better to reconsider their refusal to negotiate with Colombo. Sri Lankan President Junius R. Jayewardene submitted a new offer of a solution at the end of June which granted a large measure of autonomy to parts of the island where the Tamils are in a majority, a plan that New Delhi considered positive. The offer, which caused the Sri Lankan government serious problems with the country's Sinhala majority, was formally dismissed as "inadequate" by the Tamil separatists.

Since then the Indian press has been carrying a growing number of articles attacking the Tamil guerrillas' attitude and hinting that Rajiv Gandhi was becoming irritated with the Sri Lankan Tamils' intransigence. With the weekend police swoop, the Indian Prime Minister hopes to make them more amenable to reason. In Colombo, the government has no illusions; while expressing its satisfaction with the Indian initia-

Continued on page 13

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Attacks on French deal with Syria smack of hypocrisy

By André Fontaine

Freedom's smile: Pictured under a portrait of Syria's President Assad at the Foreign Ministry in Damascus before their flight to France are Marcel Coudari (left) and Camille Sontag, the freed hostages.

IN THE course of 24 hours France set its hand to a (softish) declaration of solidarity with Britain against Syria and offered public thanks to the same Syria for having facilitated, with Algerian and Saudi Arabian cooperation, the release of two (French) hostages held in Lebanon. There would appear to be a contradiction here, even if things become clearer on reading (Prime Minister) Jacques Chirac's remarks carried in the Washington Times, which (former Foreign Minister) Claude Cheysson rightly saw as a finally "consistent" setting out of France's policy in the Middle East.

True, this is not the only contradiction in these cases. There was a contradiction between the denial with which the Prime Minister reacted to the publication of excerpts of the interview and his office's embarrassed silence when the full text was subsequently printed.

There was a contradiction between the sharpness of the CDS's (Centre Democratique et Social — one of Chirac's coalition partners) reactions to what might have been said a fortnight ago on the negotiations with Syria and its silence today. Contradiction between the bluntness of some of the Prime Minister's statements in the interview he gave the Moon sect's newspaper and the extremely low-key reactions of the capitals concerned. Bonn to begin with and even — one sparrow doesn't make a summer — Jerusalem. So much so that more inventive imaginations are wondering whether the "indiscretion" was not deliberate, whether it was not part of the arrangement, the deal as they say today, that was done over the hostages.

We do not for the moment really know the terms of the deal, which is why we cannot pass definitive judgment on it. The only thing which appears to have been more or less established is that there is no direct link between the case of the hostages and the Paris bombings.

In the first case, the privileged interlocutor is Tehran, in the second, Damascus. Under the circumstances, it is difficult not to see a coincidence between the release of Sontag and Coudari and the announcement that the French and Iranian ministers were on the point of signing a partial agreement settling the dispute concerning a down-payment the Shah made in his time on the purchase of nuclear power plants, which have now been abandoned by the ayatollahs. But as Syria, whose economy is in a sorry state, is now endeavouring above all to refurbish its reputation, it was agreed to show it in a good light at the moment the two hostages were released.

It is moreover revealing to compare what Tehran Radio, the Organisation of Revolutionary Justice and the Syrian authorities have been saying in the past 24 hours. The Syrians say they will make every effort to obtain the release of more hostages, while Tehran Radio tries to exploit the cracks in France's power-sharing arrangement by contrasting Jacques Chirac's realism with the policy followed previously by the left. Chirac, says Tehran Radio, has "met many of the conditions laid down" by Iran for normalising relations.

As for the ORJ, which was holding the two freed hostages, it implicates the French government to the hilt by announcing that they were released following "commitments" made by Paris and expressing the hope that France would not "go back on its promises", in which case it would be obliged "to act in a manner with which French leaders are familiar."

It couldn't have been put more elegantly. It is difficult for a Frenchman not to feel deeply humiliated, especially when he thinks of the machismo of so many official statements. Difficult also not to think that the day someone tries to wring a new concession from us, he will only have to take more hostages (assuming that all the hostages have been freed by then). For who will be convinced that there hadn't been negotiations of one sort or another? Le Figaro speaks bluntly of "blackmail", though it concludes it was difficult for the government to do much else.

Could it? The fact is negotiations were already taking place when Laurent Fabius was Prime Minister, so much so that the hostages issue took a large part of the time of the top civil servants working at the Quai d'Orsay. The main difference compared with the situation that existed before the (March 16) general election is that the emphasis has been deliberately put on normalising relations with Tehran, and the first step towards this was taken with the expulsion from France of the Iranians' *bête noire* Masud Rajavi and his People's Mujahidin. The question is how far the ayatollahs want to go, and whether what is at stake, when all's said and done, is France's support for Iraq in the war against Iran. Jacques Chirac, who once played a central part in engineering the rapprochement with Baghdad, cannot obviously yield on this without going back on his word and provoking a crisis between France and the many countries in the Middle East worried by the rising tide of Shi'ite fundamentalism.

In any case, France is not the only country that is negotiating. The US press has been full of disclosures lately concerning the White House's covert Rambo-style horsetrading with Iran, to which it does not hesitate to deliver arms — via Israel — in order to obtain the release of American hostages. What a world! Jacques Chirac was perhaps wrong to make a statement to the Moon sect's newspaper, but when he attacks the prevailing hypocrisy it is hard not to go along with him.

But the fact remains, the fundamental question has been put to French and world opinion. A government, of whatever stripe, could afford to flatly refuse to negotiate over hostages only if it knew, without any doubt, that the vast majority of the public was behind it. Is this the case here? In the end, it is far easier to resist blackmail accompanied by bomb threats, because this is tantamount to taking the entire nation hostage, because it produces a laudable determination among the public as was seen in September, than to cold-bloodedly abandon a few named innocents. Democracies are indeed still nowhere near finding an effective answer to this new kind of challenge.

This is certainly going to take a lot of doing, even though it has got to be admitted that the only 100-per-cent-effective answer would come from a genuine political settlement in the Middle East. All the more reason then for doggedly continuing to work for it.

(November 13)

Tamils

Continued from page 12

tive, it is insisting on the will to work out a compromise.

At any rate, two years after taking on the Prime Ministership, Rajiv Gandhi is confirming the impression that he wants to come to grips with problems, as was illustrated by the firmness he showed in the Sikh crisis and, more recently, in his determination to inject some order in the socialist management of the economy.

(November 11)

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Dürrenmatt's moral tale

By Michel Contat

"AND how is Max Frisch?" When I went to interview Friedrich Dürrenmatt at his home in Neuchâtel, I could not resist asking after his great friend and rival, "the other" great Swiss writer. The fact that people tend to mix them up, and that outside Switzerland they are often thought to be German (because they write in German), is a source of great amusement to both.

Dürrenmatt and Frisch are, more than anything else, international writers: Dürrenmatt's latest novel, "Justiz", which has just come out in French, has already been translated into 20 languages since it first appeared in German last year, and "Der Auftrag" ("The Mission"), soon to be published by Diogenes Verlag in Zurich, will no doubt be similarly treated.

Frisch and Dürrenmatt's works are now classics. Both writers, of course, are potential Nobel prizewinners. But the fact that they are both Swiss has probably tied the hands of the Nobel jury, which must be anxious not to offend either man.

In France they are better known as playwrights than as novelists. But that does not stop Frisch and Dürrenmatt being confused in the public mind. Every schoolboy of course knows that "The Visit" is by Dürrenmatt and "The Fire-Raisers" by Frisch. But what about "The Marriage of Mr. Mississippi"?

Try asking your friends which writer wrote it — and what distinguishes one from the other. Those with any pretensions to literary culture will reply that Dürrenmatt is an exponent of "the absurd" and Frisch a "Brechtian".

That cliché took a knock when Dürrenmatt's "Stoffer" appeared in French last year. It revealed a writer who handles his own imaginary material with great care and achieves a totally new interweaving of reflective autobiography and narrative creation — a Franz Kafka casting a philosophical eye on his own writing.

French television viewers got a chance to see Dürrenmatt himself last year when he appeared on the highly popular book programme, "Apostrophes": a massive Orson Welles-like figure, he sat there observing with sardonic amusement, and at times utter disbelief, the verbal sparring match being conducted on the same set by those two literary enemies, Philippe Sollers and Alain Robbe-Grillet. Dürrenmatt stole the show with meaningful silences.

By appearing on "Apostrophes" authors can boost sales by 20,000 copies. Dürrenmatt no doubt does not need help of that kind, since the success of "Justiz" will probably be guaranteed by word of mouth. In "Justiz" — the virulence of Dürrenmatt's comic effects, his use of the grotesque, bring to mind only one other writer, Kafka.

"Justiz", as you might expect, concerns a murder. Readers of Dürrenmatt are familiar with his philosophical reworkings of the detective story genre. In novels like "The Judge and His Hangman," "The Suspicion" and "The Pledge" he used the framework of a police inquiry as a stalking horse with which to tackle major themes — or rather, to simplify matters, one major theme: evil and life's absurdity, both of which, Dürrenmatt feels, we should not resign ourselves to.

"The Breakdown", his best-known novel in France, which parodies a trial conducted by some mischief-making retired magistrates, subjected the very fabric of the Protestant conscience — guilt — to extremely robust treatment.

All the novels I have mentioned, which date from the '50s, have a rather grim existentialist colouring; the grotesque was already beginning to show its face, but it was still accompanied by angst. In "The Breakdown" the farce turns sour: the accused man, as a joke, ends up by really hanging himself.

In "Justiz", Dürrenmatt reveals immediately who the culprit is: he describes how a politician kills an academic in a crowded restaurant. The second section consists of the report by the lawyer who has been asked by the guilty man, now in prison, to investigate one possible hypothesis: suppose he were not guilty?

After obtaining his acquittal on appeal, through a kind of philosophical swindle, the lawyer prepares to take justice into his own hands by killing the politician and then committing suicide.

"The work of a dilettante," the author remarks ironically before going on to claim, in the book's third section, that he is only the publisher of the material which makes up the first two parts, and which was passed on to him by the Zurich police chief.

It would be unfair on the reader to give away Dürrenmatt's ending. Constructed in a series of extensions like a huge telescope pointing at the great secret of justice, it is clearly a parable. But a parable of what?

Of power? Of human intelligence, which strives to measure up to God by carrying out experiments, by playing with people as though they were billiard balls? Should Isaak Kohler, the murderer who is at once member of parliament, doctor honoris causa, and holder of the power of attorney for a large consortium, be regarded as a theological figure, as some God who assassinates deviously?

As soon as I made my quip about Max Frisch, I realised it would fall flat. "I don't know how he is," the 65-year-old Dürrenmatt replied. "I haven't had any news of him. He didn't send me his latest book, 'Bluebeard'. I wouldn't have read it in any case. I don't read fiction, I write it — which is quite enough."

On his huge desk, next to a lexicon of philosophical terms and the book he is currently working on (neatly arranged in folders), sat Alexander Solzhenitsyn's *"November 16"*, a thick volume which he had already started reading. "What a bore! And he gives such a stereotyped image of Switzerland and Zurich when the revolutionaries were here. All fat novels are unreadable."

Aragon's immolated manuscript rises from the flames of surrealism

Two hundred pages of Louis Aragon's manuscript, "La Défense de l'infini", which escaped destruction at the author's hands have now been published.

By Pierre Lepape

LOUIS ARAGON'S "La Défense de l'infini" has occupied in contemporary literature the kind of place the Loch Ness monster occupies in tourist lore: people have been talking a great deal about it without ever having seen it. And for good reason, too. One chilly evening in November 1927 at the La Puerta del Sol Hotel in Madrid, Aragon destroyed the "1,500 pages or more" on which he had scribbled his novel as his friend Nancy Cunard looked on. An event he recalled in his 1928 poem, "Le Chant de la Puerta del Sol":

Alors, j'ai déchiré quatre années de ma vie
Dans mes tremblantes mains de mes doigts noués durs
Quatre ans les feuilles de quatre ans rameutés
Pour le feu projeté les flammes tout à l'heu.

(So I tore up four years of my life, four years, the writings of four years gathered up in my trembling hands with their fingers knotted hard destined for the fire, the flames in a moment.)

Today, thanks to Edouard Ruiz's patient labours and Aragon's own subsequent reservations, long fragments (about 200 pages) of "La Défense de l'infini" have at last been published, and we are now in a slightly better position to assess the significance of the work that the surrealist group's dogmatism strangled at birth — probably the most wide-ranging and ambitious novelistic oeuvre of the '30s.

In his "Je n'ai jamais appris à écrire ou les incipits" ("I never learned to write, or the incipits (beginnings)", Aragon described the structure of his work: "It was a novel where you entered by as many doors as there were characters. I didn't know anything at all about the background of any of the characters; each being determined on the basis of one of those constellations of words I mentioned, by its oddity, its improbability, I mean by the improbable manner of its development . . .

"This whole slew of characters were to end up, each by the logic or illogicality of his destiny, in a sort of monstrous whorehouse where criticism or confusion would work among them, I mean the defeat of all moral values in a sort of vast ...."

When he began writing "La Défense" — probably in 1923 — Aragon knew he would be bringing down upon himself the wrath and violence, at least verbal violence, of his surrealist comrades, especially his friend André Breton.

The surrealists had uncompromisingly and irrevocably condemned the fictional form. And the novel was the very expression of this bourgeois, institutional and comfortable literature which the surrealists were out to blow up. It was literature as opposed to the life that they were determined to change through revolutionary deeds, not words.

Aragon was far too involved with the group, far too loyal to Breton — "I came to know a man who wasn't like the others..." — to express the least dissidence on this point. Even if he said nothing, or rather if he voiced the same intransigence as his friends and just as extravagantly, Aragon was nonetheless tormented. He condemned literature, yet felt himself to be a writer.

The group kept watch, but Aragon cheated, perhaps unconsciously. Will we ever know when he lied and when he began lying to himself? In 1926, he published "Le Paysan de Paris". And it was indeed a kind of novel, and what's more, a love story, something that was doubly anathema to the surrealists. However, Aragon swaddled his tale, his account, his frenzy in such a finery of provocation, outbursts, wildly exaggerated professions of allegiance to André Breton and the doctrine, insults directed against literary men, newspapers and critics that the surrealists, spellbound by this dazzling display of verbal pyrotechnics and completely taken in by the most gifted member of their group, let him get away with it.

He took a completely different tack with "La Défense de l'infini". "I don't think people could understand the first thing about me if no dates are put on my thinking and writing," he wrote. To explain the process that led to the destruction of a major work, we need to look closely at the dates. In 1925 (he was then 28) Aragon got to know "the radiant brown girl", the "Buttes-Chaumont lady", but we are unlikely to know whether this was his first encounter with love. Among the surrealists, who deliberately cultivated a misogynous stance and in their daily lives rated liaisons with women solely for their material values, the whorehouse was central to an "amorous" relationship stripped of every hypocrisy. Aragon's meeting with the Buttes-Chaumont lady, and later with the rich, free and domineering Nancy Cunard, caused a kind of break between the poet and the group, a split that paralleled the literary split. She was the Stranger, this upper middle-class American woman who was leading Aragon by the nose from city to city, from fashionable nightclub to luxury hotel.

Then there was the Communist Party. In 1927, a few months after Eluard, Aragon signed up. It was also a few months before Breton, too. But the Communist Party balked at these new memberships. These young intellectual fire-raisers scared it somewhat, and especially the foppish Aragon, whose social background was hazy, who lived with an American multimillionaire's grand-daughter and lugged around in his baggage a collection of 2,000 neckties and extravagantly expensive suits.

Aragon had to give pledges to both sides so they would accept him. All his life he felt the need to be accepted, to be part of a group, a life, to be seen by others. With the Communists, this foreplay lasted five years. Aragon was finally accepted among them only in 1932 after he broke with Breton's group. The Communist Party's attitude towards the surrealists was both more devious and violent. Aragon clung to the group as if it were his family, his country. When he did not turn up for the ritual daily aperitif with Breton, it was as if he had slept out. When he went on trips to Britain, Spain or elsewhere with Nancy Cunard, it was as if he were deserting. When he wrote "La Défense de l'infini", he was betraying the group. Love and literature continued to exert a strong pull on him, but he was still hoping to avoid the break, to overcome the contradiction.

He secretly let a fragment of his work in progress go for a limited edition — Nancy obligingly came up with the money. It was the "Le Con d'Irène" whose paternity Aragon persisted in denying to the very end. It is much more than a piece of great erotic writing: it is a lyric ode against "bitchiness". He next allowed another fragment of his work to be published and dedicated it to Breton. It was "Entrée des succubes", a breathtaking demolition of Freudian methods. He kept publishing more occasional fragments until one day he tried to get his surrealist friends to accept a more substantial extract from his work, "Le Cahier noir".

This time, he had gone too far. The reason he was not thrown out of the surrealist circle immediately was that Breton still protected him. But Aragon had to make amends for his novelistic sin in the only possible way — by getting rid of the corpus delicti.

The Madrid destruction of "La Défense de l'infini" was evidently a way of committing symbolic suicide. A writer decides to die for literature. But before immolating himself, Aragon nevertheless did take the trouble — the unconscious at work here again? who can say? — to scatter randomly bits and pieces of his sacrifice all over the place. He immolated himself, but without resigning himself to complete disappearance.

A year later, on November 6, 1928 Aragon met Elsa Triolet. From then on he led a life where he belonged to something different, another family, another kind of censorship, owing other loyalties, claiming other truths and other lies.

** Aragon's "La Défense de l'infini", followed by "Les Aventures de Jean-Foutre la Bite", Gallimard, Paris; 300 pp. F95. Cloth-bound numbered limited edition of 2,000 copies published by Editions Messidor, 312 pp. F300.*

Afghanistan

Continued from page 11

was not ready for such a graft and thus compromising the future of communism in Afghanistan. Karmal had now become an embarrassment. Two months after the congress, he was replaced by General Najib, the head of the Afghan secret service.

The situation has reversed. Karmal, rightly considered to be the Soviets' man, is today seen almost as an opposition figure and has regained a degree of popularity in Kabul. A younger, less educated man, but one who is also more flexible than Karmal was in 1979, Najib will carry out the policies that the Soviets dictate. Gorbachev has yet to show his hand, but he is giving tiny clues singly. The ouster of Karmal, too closely indentified with the intervention itself, is one. The withdrawal in October of 8,000 Soviet troops from Afghanistan is another. Najib's appeal for setting up a government of "national union", possibly including opponents who agree to lay down their arms, is a third clue.

Gorbachev appears to be looking for a "political" solution in Afghanistan. And for this, anything goes, including — and why not? — the return of the former king, if he agrees to a figurehead role, or simply wants to live out the last years of his life in his own country. But the Soviet army, which has built permanent barracks in the northern part of the country, will withdraw only when the regular Afghan army is in a position to replace it. This is not the case today, and is unlikely to be so in the forseeable future.

(November 16)

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Directeur: Andre Fontaine
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The Washington Post

Oil And Iran's Price

OPEC'S recent behavior is becoming less mysterious. The explanations are beginning to fall into place. It will be interesting to learn at what point Saudi Arabia realized that the United States was sending arms to Iran. But even without much light there, it's possible to start putting together — at least tentatively — an account of what's been happening in OPEC. To measure the purely economic cost of President Reagan's turnaround on Iran, keep your eye on the price of oil.

The basic split in OPEC for the past 15 years has been between the radicals who want the highest possible price and the conservatives who want a lower price and stable markets. Iran and Libya have consistently been the leaders among the radicals. Saudi Arabia speaks for the conservatives. That tension has been sharpened by the Iran-Iraq war, for the Saudis have been providing indispensable financial support to Iraq.

Late in the summer of 1985, when prices were high, the Saudis' exports were falling to levels that they considered intolerably low. They reversed their strategy, pushing up production and letting prices fall — as they did, very rapidly, last winter and spring. It was good luck for the industrial countries, where inflation rates dropped reassuringly. But it was disastrous for many oil producers from Texas to Tehran.

Texas couldn't do anything about it, but Tehran did. In the war with Iraq, the Iranians achieved unexpected success early this year. Under the ayatollahs, Iran seemed to be reasserting its former [illegible] region's dominant [illegible] the United States react? In May, it now develops, the president sent his former national security adviser to Tehran in a plane loaded with military equipment. In July there were further shipments.

At OPEC's meeting in August, with the price of oil below $10 a barrel, the Saudis began moving to compromise with Iran and cut production. That's why the price has now risen several dollars. At the end of OPEC's long and quarrelsome meeting last month, the Saudi king fired his oil minister, Sheik Ahmed Zaki Yamani, a special target of the Iranian radicals. Kuwait, which was pressing hard for a higher production quota in October, now says that it too is in favor of higher prices.

Even before the American overtures to Iran became public knowledge, the Saudis and most of their neighbors were moving to propitiate Iran. Mr. Reagan's speech last week will be read in the Persian Gulf as an authoritative declaration that the United States wants an accommodation with Iran. Until last summer, Saudi Arabia was the dominant force in OPEC, but that seems to be changing. OPEC meets again next month, and now it's the conservatives who are talking about production cuts to push oil prices back into the range of $18 to $20 a barrel-half again as high as the present price. Mr. Reagan's overtures to Iran are not going to be inexpensive.

Hostage-Takers Renew Demands

By Washington Post Reporters

MOSLEM extremists still holding at least two American hostages in Lebanon called on "the American government" at the weekend to "take a bigger role and wider steps to meet our demands and resolve the hostage question". The Islamic Jihad organization, in a typewritten statement sent to American news agencies in Beirut, said that the Nov. 2 release of hostage David Jacobsen "was a result of some moves that would lead, if continued, to a solution of the hostage issue". The organization warned, however, that "the American government should realize very well that we shall not resolve the issue of the hostages unless our demands are met. We shall not budge a fraction of a fingertip on this".

They are demanding that Kuwait free 17 persons convicted of the 1983 bombing of the U.S. and French embassies in that country. At least one and possibly three of those being held in Kuwait are believed to be relatives of members of the Islamic Jihad group holding Terry A. Anderson, the 39-year-old chief Middle East correspondent for The Associated Press, and Thomas Sutherland, 55, the acting dean of agriculture at the American University of Beirut.

The Kuwaitis have vowed never to release their prisoners and the Reagan administration has said that it will not bring pressure on Kuwait to do so. It was not clear from the statement issued Saturday if the "wider steps" called for allude only to the Kuwaiti prisoners. They could also include the clandestine arms pipeline started by Reagan, the longstanding Iranian demands that the United States ship the arms paid for by Iran prior to the 1979 revolution and kept in the U.S. and the Iranian request to unfreeze nearly $500 million in Iranian funds.

The statement was the first by the organization since Jacobsen's release and since President Reagan confirmed that he had secretly authorized shipments of military equipment to Iran. Reagan said the shipments were meant as a sign of "good faith" in an 18-month-old effort to improve relations with Tehran and to get the Iranians "to use their influence" in the hostage release.

The National Security Adviser, Adm. John Poindexter, last week struck a note of cautious optimism that the Reagan initiative might still prove successful. "It may very well be . . . the revelation of the project may expedite the whole process a little bit and there are signs that that may happen."

Poindexter also talked about good faith by unidentified Iranians in the aftermath of the June 1985 TWA hijacking, the refusal of Tehran to provide landing rights for the Pan Am jet hijacked in Karachi, Pakistan, in September, and to "empirical evidence" that Iran had stopped "being involved or encouraging anybody in taking hostages" for about a year. But White House chief of staff Donald T. Regan took a more pessimistic view, saying he did not think "this avenue" could be pursued again "for quite some time to come".

In his address President Reagan said that the United States had not paid "ransom" to Iran for the American hostages in Lebanon, but has covertly sent arms to Tehran to gain "access and influence" there, end the 6-year-old Iran-Iraq war, and stem international terrorism. In a nationally televised address from the Oval Office, Reagan said: "We did not — repeat, did not — trade weapons or anything else for hostages — nor will we. Those who think we have 'gone soft' on terrorism should take up the question with Colonel Gadhafi."

Claiming that the Iran operation was begun 18 months ago "for the best of reasons," Reagan acknowledged that U.S. officials had talked with unidentified factions in Iran about pressuring other groups in Lebanon to release the American hostages. But he denied that the arms sent to Iran were a "ransom payment".

Reagan discussed only the broadest details of the Iran operation. He did not mention strong objections that were raised to the shipments of arms by Secretary of State George Shultz and Secretary of Defense Caspar W. Weinberger. He also omitted mention of Israel's role in establishing contacts inside Iran and shipping the U.S. weapons, and he sidestepped the question of whether the timing of the arms shipments was linked to release of the hostages, as other officials have reported.

Instead, Reagan said that the arms shipped were "small amounts" and "modest deliveries" that "could easily fit into a single cargo plane" He said the weapons were "defensive" in nature.

In Tunis, the Arab League called Reagan's statement a "new and dangerous" element in relations between the Arab world and the United States Secretary General Chedli Klibi said the arms deliveries to Tehran were a "flagrant violation" of Washington's professed neutrality. "Reagan has declared an umbrella of protection for the Gulf and at the same time he's giving arms to the Iranian army threatening this area," said Mahmoud Riad, former Egyptian foreign minister.

Prince Bandar bin Sultan, the Saudi ambassador to Washington, complained to Admiral Poindexter, the president's national security adviser about the "lack of candor" in the U.S.-Saudi relationship. Poindexter replied "Trust us, trust us." Bandar: "You've already proven that we can't trust you."

They No Longer Believe Him

By David Hoffman

WASHINGTON — As President Reagan was returning here from Los Angeles Nov. 4 on Air Force One, his national security adviser, Vice Adm. John M. Poindexter, wrote a statement in longhand responding to questions about a Lebanese magazine report that the United States had sent weapons to Iran.

"As long as Iran advocates the use of terrorism, the U.S. arms embargo will continue," Poindexter wrote. "Moreover, the U.S. position on the Iran-Iraq war remains that the fighting should stop and the two sides should reach a negotiated settlement of their dispute. We favor an outcome where there are no winners or losers."

Presidential spokesman Larry Speakes then read the statement to reporters on the plane, adding that there had been "no manifestation of a definitive change in Iran's policy on terrorism."

Poindexter's carefully worded statement was literally correct, but it was less than the full story. When he wrote it, Poindexter knew that Reagan had secretly authorized the shipment of weapons to Iran as part of a yearlong covert operation aimed in part at freeing American hostages in Lebanon.

The disclosure of the weapons deliveries at a time when the United States was publicly seeking to stanch the flow of arms to Iran marked the latest in a series of embarrassing foreign policy episodes in which the president's credibility has been severely tested. Moreover, when challenged, the White House has frequently responded by refusing to tell the full story of Reagan's actions.

Admiral Poindexter

In the last six months, Reagan has repeatedly been forced to explain why he deviated from his stated policies, why his public statements were at odds with his private actions, why he appears to have undercut his Cabinet members and why key leaders in Congress, in the military and among U.S. allies were not consulted.

The result could be months of confrontation ahead with Congress, according to senior presidential advisers and influential Republicans on Capitol Hill. Democrats, who will take control of the Senate in January, are certain to conduct investigations in the next few months on Iran, as well as Reagan's arms control policies and the conduct of U.S. officials in supporting the Nicaraguan rebels.

The events that have raised questions about Reagan's credibility began with contradictory explanations last summer of his decision to no longer abide by the limits of the unratified SALT II treaty. Later came Reagan's reversal on a deal for the release of American reporter Nicholas Daniloff; his approval of a "disinformation" campaign against Libya's Moammar Gadhafi; his confused account of the final talks with Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev at Reykjavik; the questions about whether his aides violated a congressional ban on aid to the Nicaraguan rebels; and now, the secret Iran operation.

Although each of these problems was different, White House aides and Republicans said they represent a new and troubling challenge to Reagan's standing that, if allowed to fester, could become a serious handicap in his final two years in office.

Reagan has suffered in recent years from miscalculation, as in Lebanon, and from prolonged internal disagreement, as in the impasse over arms control. But until now, his credibility as a leader was largely untarnished, and one of his great strengths was his ability to rally Americans behind him during crises. Whenever a policy fell apart, such as in the Marine barracks bombing in Beirut, which killed 241 U.S. servicemen, Reagan put this credibility to its highest and best use — he gave a speech to explain it on his own terms.

"Our problem has never been that people didn't believe him," said a high-ranking White House official. "Sometimes, our problem was that people elieved him too much."

But the Iran operation may have seriously damaged that. An ABC

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Reagan Gagged CIA's Casey

By Bob Woodward

WASHINGTON — President Reagan in mid-January ordered CIA Director William J.Casey in writing not to inform the congressional intelligence committees of a covert action involving the shipment of arms to Iran and the release of American hostages in Lebanon, informed sources said last week. Senior administration officials said the president has full legal authority to begin sensitive covert operations without giving prior notice to Congress, although several key Republican and Democratic members of Congress sharply disagreed.

After the 1984 controversy over the CIA's mining of Nicaraguan harbors, Casey pledged in writing to inform the Senate and House intelligence committees within 48 hours of any intelligence activities or covert actions approved by the president, but "Casey's hands are clean on this one," one source said. Since the revelations of intelligence abuses in the mid-1970s, Congress has virtually guaranteed the public that there will be thorough oversight of intelligence operations.

The president's national security adviser, Vice Admiral John Poindexter, defended the decision to keep the covert operation from Congress because of the extreme sensitivity of contacts with Iran and the potential danger to American hostages. In a luncheon meeting with reporters and editors at The Washington Post, Poindexter said he kept the one-page presidential intelligence order, called a "finding," in his White House House office safe, and that its existence and contents were known only to a handful of administration officials.

The Senate Intelligence committee was informed last week of the presidential finding, but two senators on the committee said the 10-month delay was totally unacceptable and subverted the spirit of congressional oversight of intelligence operations. "How many more 'findings' of secret operations are there in Poindexter's safe?" asked one Republican senator.

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The Washington Post

Hasenfus Gets 30 Years

THE US mercenary, Eugene Hasenfus, was sentenced to 30 years in gaol on Saturday for delivering guns to counter revolutionaries in Nicaragua. The former Marine remained stone-faced as the 11-page verdict was read in Spanish and English. The US Government immediately denounced the guilty verdict as a predictable propaganda move.

The three-judge panel on the People's Anti-Somocista Tribunal in Managua convicted Hasenfus after a 26-day trial for terrorism, conspiracy, and threatening Nicaraguan security.

Hasenfus baled out of a burning cargo plane on October 5 after it was hit by a Sandinista anti-aircraft missile. He was captured the next day and the plane was found to be carrying arms destined for the US-backed contras. Two US pilots and a Nicaraguan radio operator were killed.

The Justice Minister, Mr Rodrigo Reyes, who was chief prosecutor in the trial, said he doubted that a pardon would be granted. He said more than 16,000 Nicaraguans have died in a war aided by US-supplied arms. "What would we get out of a pardon?" Mr Reyes said. "If they would tell me that they would stop all aid to the contras, I would say give them anyone they want, but that's not going to happen." Since Hasenfus was captured the US Congress had given final approval to $100 million aid to the contras and US military manoeuvres had increased.

Verdict — And Costs

THE EXPECTED guilty verdict has been handed down in Nicaragua's trial of Eugene Hasenfus, lone survivor of the American plane filled with guns for the contras that the Sandinistas shot down on Oct. 5. Mr. Hasenfus, a former CIA pilot in Indochina, took risks for money in an operation directed by two Cuban-Americans working, he said, for the CIA. The Sandinistas presented him as a factor in an extended CIA operation running guns out of El Salvador. He became a windfall exhibit in a propaganda campaign they had already begun against the new $100 million American program to support the contra cause.

The Reagan administration disclaims any official connection to the downed aircraft or to a gun-running operation that ostensibly private American citizens conducted to keep the contras going during the two years when official American aid was barred by law. One result of this stance is to prevent the United States from expressing any but a disinterested humanitarian interest in Mr. Hasenfus now. It is possible that the Nicaraguan authorities, after squeezing what political advantage they can from his conviction, will figure they can squeeze a bit more from an early pardon.

The Sandinistas, after all, have made their several points. One is that El Salvador has been allowing Americans to run supplies to the Nicaraguan resistance. This spoils El Salvador's previous image as an unoffending victim of Nicaraguan intervention; it now emerges also as a contributor to an answering intervention of its own. The Salvadoran president did not seem to know his military was sanctioning the flights, which now apparently have ended. Coming just as the $100 million was released, this is a major blow to the contras.

The Hasenfus affair has also provided heavy ammunition to Americans opposing contra aid. It is not simply that the Reagan administration's depiction of the supply operation as strictly private keeps wearing thinner. A whole pattern of National Security Council short-circuiting is now coming into public view. The effect is to emphasize the dubious and shady aspects of American involvement in Nicaragua over the high-minded anti-Sandinista aspects that the administration prefers to underline. All this happens, moreover, as a newly Democratic Senate prepares to draw a bead on contra aid. The costs of the Hasenfus affair, it is evident, will not be borne by the defendant alone

Problems For Mrs Aquino

CORAZON AQUINO, president of the Philippines, is safely back from Japan after a trip that prompted heavy worries about whether a coup might take place while she was gone. Her trials, however, go on. They center in a sense on Defense Minister Juan Ponce Enrile. He abandoned his longtime patron, Ferdinand Marcos, last winter and helped deliver the united military support that made her triumph by "people power" possible and peaceful. But he then turned bitter critic, directing special attention to Mrs. Aquino's approach to the Philippines' communist insurgency. He also has seemed unashamedly ambitious to supplant her in power. Partly as a result, President Aquino's leadership has come under scrutiny, in this country as at home, and doubt is being expressed about the future of democracy in a place where its return was hailed a triumph for American policy.

Some of Mrs. Aquino's troubles arise from a tendency for people to wonder whether the qualities of innocence and moral worthiness that helped her undo the old regime are useful now for bringing civil peace and political and economic renewal. At the same time, she has sometimes seemed to hesitate at making hard choices. This is the context in which alarming reports of a military plot against the Aquino government began circulating. The president, heading off on her trip to Japan, actually felt it necessary to caution against a coup. Chief of Staff Gen. Fidel Ramos, a respected professional soldier who has emphasized his subordination to civilian authority, issued a stiff public warning to any "military adventurists" considering "rash" action.

Mrs. Aquino returned to Manila, still the president, having to face a crisis ignited by the murder of a leading unionist and politician of the left. Nowhere is she under harsher pressure, however, than in respect to the strong and long-running insurgency of the communist New People's Army. Minister Enrile's complaints that she is not tough enough on the guerrillas have gained a wide audience. Currently Mrs. Aquino is engaged in a sensitive cease-fire negotiation with the rebels. They ask her to grant legitimacy and even to cede some territorial control. But she is the legitimate leader, and Philippine democracy now offers the only legitimate political process. She is right to offer reconciliation with the new, imperfect but improvable democratic order, but she must expect and [illegible] loyalty to it by all of her country's citizens.

They No Longer Believe Him

Continued from page 15

News poll showed that Americans overwhelmingly did not believe Reagan's explanation of the Iran arms shipments. "We've taken a direct hit," said another White House official.

The next step is certain to be months of probing by Congress that could undermine Reagan's agenda for the next two years. The administration "is going to have a hell of a problem with liberals on the Senate Foreign Relations Committee," a Republican congressional aide said. "The Democrats are going to come out with six-guns blazing. They are going to have a series of 'show trials' of Reagan policies." These would include arms control, aid to the Nicaraguan rebels and Iran.

This approach was foreshadowed Saturday when Sen. Patrick J. Leahy, D-Vt., vice chairman of the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence, said, "We know what the White House wanted to do, but it seems they didn't know how to do it . . . A policy of not making deals with terrorists must be painfully put together again. Our allies must be reassured that we will not say one thing publicly and do the opposite in private."

In the Iran operation, White House officials said the damage to Reagan's credibility was exacerbated when he was effectively deserted by his Cabinet members, including Secretary of State George P. Shultz and Defense Secretary Caspar W. Weinberger, both of whom had privately objected to the arms shipments to Iran. When they were overruled, however, both kept their concerns secret.

Shultz also continued to urge other nations to honor the U.S. arms embargo against Iran. Nine months after Reagan signed a secret directive that sanctioned covert arms shipments, Shultz, in an Oct. 2 speech to the Gulf Cooperative Council, criticized the Soviet Union for not doing enough to halt arms shipments to Iran. The Soviets, he said, "have not acted as forcefully as we in moving to block arms resupplied to Iran from countries with which they have influence. We wish they would do more."

Many of the White House and Republican officials expressed dismay at what they described as inadequate and incoherent explanations for policy decisions over the last six months. For example, after the May 27 announcement that the United States would no longer abide by SALT II limits, Reagan, at a nationally televised news conference, left the impression that he might return to the treaty limits. The next day, the White House announced that the treaty "no longer exists."

When U.S. News & World Report correspondent Nicholas Daniloff was arrested in Moscow, Reagan angrily insisted Sept. 9 "there will be no trade" of Dailoff for accused Soviet spy Gennadi Zakharov. But Reagan then accepted the equivalent of such a trade in which a Soviet dissident, Yuri Orlov, was also freed.

Another challenge to Reagan's credibility came with the disclosure of a secret campaign of deception against Gadhafi designed to convince him that he was about to be attacked again by U.S. bombers and perhaps ousted in a coup. The plan, outlined in a memo written by Poindexter, called for a campaign of "disinformation" against the Libyan leader. After Reagan's approval, false information generated by the plan appeared in The Wall Street Journal and other American newspapers, including The Washington Post.

Yet another embarrassing challenge to Reagan's believability came after the Reykjavik summit.



Reagan said he had proposed the elimination of all ballistic missiles in his talks with Gorbachev. But the Soviets said he had endorsed a Gorbachev proposal to eliminate all strategic forces — a much broader concept — which the White House later conceded.

After the summit, Reagan campaigned vigorously on the theme that an arms reduction agreement was close at hand; in a little-noticed statement issued after the election, he was far more pessimistic, accusing the Soviets of being "more interested in conducting a public relations campaign" than in negotiating.

The White House has also left unanswered many questions about its role in aiding the Nicaraguan rebels during the period that Congress banned such help. Questioned last week about the reasons for these controversies, Poindexter said it was because Reagan "is interested in changing the status quo" and so "there are going to be ripples."

In many cases, the gap between Reagan's policies and his statements reflects deeper divisions in the administration. For example, Soviet spy Zakharov was arrested as part of an effort by the Federal Bureau of Investigation and Central Intelligence Agency to crack down on Soviet espionage in the United States — a move that subsequently collided with efforts by other policy-makers to accelerate arms control negotiations.

But other contradictions underscore what aides say is an abiding Reagan characteristic — to believe one thing in the abstract and another in practice. In the case of Iran, for example, the president gave many speeches denouncing terrorism; he described Iran in July 1985 as part of a "a new international version of Murder Incorporated."

In practice, Reagan responded emotionally to appeals for action from families of the Americans held hostage in Lebanon. Informed sources said the Iran operation had broader goals, written into all the paperwork, but freedom for the hostages was what Reagan found most compelling.

Before the operation was revealed, one source said, almost all the talk about it centered on an effort to persuade factions in Iran to use their influence to free the six remaining captives. White House chief of staff Donald T. Regan said much the same thing last week: "The president is a man of compassion. He's sitting there — you have Peggy Say (sister of hostage Terry A. Anderson), you have all the families saying 'Please, you've got to do something.' "

The informed sources said Reagan may also have been influenced to accept the secret Iran operation on grounds that it would give the United States an advantage over the Soviets in the region.

White House officials mounted a full-scale attempt to put the best face on the Iran operation last week, saying that the amount of weapons was "minuscule," that the hostage captors were distinct from the Iranians who received weapons, that the weapons were all "defensive" and that Reagan had larger strategic goals of improving U.S. ties to Iran.

But some top officials interviewed after Reagan's address Thursday on Iran privately expressed concern that he had aggravated his credibility problem by first saying nothing about the operation for more than a week and then offering strained, incomplete and sometimes conflicting explanations. "We made it sound like we sent them five firecrackers in a paper bag," said one official.

Another high-ranking official said the negative views shared by most Americans about Iran were formed during the captivity of American diplomats in 1979-80, and remain. "Our defense was that we're not really trying to trade arms for hostages, but build a relationship with Iran," he said. "That's worse!"

Rumor, Speculation, And Inference

By Jeffrey Richelson

THE SECRET OFFENSIVE, By Chapman Pincher (St. Martin's. 314pp, $15.95).

THE Soviet Union employs a variety of methods in attempting to influence political events in foreign countries. Among these methods are propaganda, forgeries, disinformation, agents of influence (an individual under Soviet control who seeks to influence governmental policy to Soviet advantage), paramilitary operations and even, on occasions, assassination. Collectively, these tactics are known as active measures. In 1979 the CIA estimated that the Soviet expenditure on active measures came to almost $3.5 billion a year.

Unfortunately, most previous full-length studies of Soviet active measures have been somewhat hysterical in tone. They depict a rampaging Soviet bear planning to devour the West after tricking it — via the use of active measures and deceitful diplomacy — into letting its guard down. Further, those who oppose significant portions of the U.S. nuclear buildup are considered to be, at best, unwittingly aiding the Soviet cause. *The Secret Offensive* by British journalist Chapman Pincher is no exception. According to Pincher, "Active measures have the prime purpose of sapping and destroying the Western will to resist the expansion of the Soviet Union's influence and territorial acquisition."

In the book's 19 chapters Pincher examines a variety of cases where he claims or implies that Soviet active measures have played a role in weakening the West's ability to resist the communist onslaught. Pincher suggests Soviet involvement in the 1962 West German *Der Spiegel* affair, which led to the ousting of Defense Minister Franz Josef Strauss, whom Pincher considers to be a formidable anti-communist. Pincher sees the use of Soviet active measures in perpetrating a Great Missile Deception on the U.S., resulting in Soviet strategic superiority. Pincher also strongly suggests a Soviet role in the assassination of President Kennedy.

Pincher repeats some well-known and accepted accounts of Soviet active measures operations. Included are a variety of forgeries — such as a fake Army field manual suggesting U.S. interference in the internal affairs of its allies and a fake presidential memorandum calling for domestic covert operations against black groups — as well as the story of French journalist and Soviet agent of influence Charles Pierre Pathé.

In many cases the material in *The Secret Offensive* is a collection of rumor, speculation and Pincher's own inference. His chapter on the Great Missile Deception alleges a Soviet campaign that originated in 1959 with the intent of lulling the U.S. into a false sense of security by making it appear that the West had a substantial lead in missile technology which the U.S.S.R. was unlikely to overtake. In order to accomplish this deception, the Soviets allegedly transmitted false information through a Soviet military officer working for the CIA and British intelligence, through a signals intelligence satellite the KGB had obtained information about, and through false defectors-in-place at the Soviet Mission to the U.N.

The specifics of most of Pincher's charges are far from being accepted by experts in the field. The Soviet officer — Oleg Penkovsky — is considered to be the most valuable person ever recruited by the CIA. But his charge concerning the feeding of false information to U.S. satellites is based on an unquestioning acceptance of claims made by a few fringe individuals. Pincher is apparently unaware that a 1981 government panel on the question concluded that the U.S. had not been deceived.

Even less substantiated are his charges that the KGB appeared to be involved in the assassination of John F. Kennedy. Pincher's sole evidence is the fact that Kennedy's alleged assassin, Lee Harvey Oswald, had defected to Russia, been subsequently allowed to return to the U.S., and had been stationed at a U.S. airbase in Japan from which U-2s had flown. Pincher argues that Oswald must have been interrogated by the KGB. In Pincher's view Oswald's murder by Jack Ruby suggests KGB involvement.

More interesting is the amount of space that Pincher devotes to the political activities and media which he considers too willing to support the Soviet point of view or oppose the U.S. or British establishments. He castigates a television company for a program in which interviews with black privates are used to suggest racism in the British army. He is appalled at the willingness of a British TV network to show a docudrama hostile to the Saudi government — given that Saudi Arabia is one of Britain's biggest overseas customers. Pincher's wrath is also directed at those in television who repeatedly showed President Gerald Ford's falls and slips — which Pincher suggests was intended to portray Ford as unfit to be in charge of nuclear weapons. One must commend Pincher's restraint in not suggesting that Chevy Chase was a Soviet agent of influence when appearing on *Saturday Night Live*.

The most disreputable portions of the book occur when Pincher resorts to his there-is-no-evidence-that-X-is-a-Soviet-agent-but-his-activities-serve-Moscow-quite-well technique. Pincher uses this technique to smear a respected British investigative journalist as well as the entire generation of European scientists who emigrated to the United States in the 1930s and '40s.

Pincher is unwilling or unable to separate proven fact from speculation, dissent from treason and disclosures from espionage. He even suggests that it would be beneficial if the British security service were able to screen candidates for all senior posts in British television companies to insure security and accuracy. It is strange then that Pincher is so concerned about the Soviet Union devouring his native Britain and the rest of the Western world. If it did it would set up exactly the type of society that Pincher seems most comfortable with.

Jeffrey Richelson, associate professor of government at The American University, is the author of "The U.S. Intelligence Community."

News As A Weapon

By Joseph Laitin

DISINFORMATION has been the subject of much editorial discussion the past month. Everybody seems to have forgotten that the Soviets invented only the word, not the practice, which is despicable. It does take on a kind of respectability in wartime because news, true or false, *is viewed by the military as another* weapon to destroy the enemy by confusing them. In an open society such as ours, even in an all-out war, there is danger of confusing your friends more than your enemies.

In World War II, all nations used disinformation, or black propaganda, as it was called then. In Washington, with the United Press, I sensed that my competition, the Associated Press's Sterling Green, was on to a big story. He scored with an exclusive splashed on the front pages on The Washington Post, The Washington Star and The New York Times.

It said that Gen. Dwight Eisenhower, commander of U.S. European Forces in London, had been ordered to return to Washington the following week for consultations with the high command to discuss details of a second front. President Roosevelt on the following day excoriated the press for publishing such unfounded speculation. A few days later, on Nov. 8, 1942, U.S. troops, led by Gen. Eisenhower, invaded North Africa. It probably was this country's first venture into deliberately planting false information in the U.S. news ~~media. There is no way of~~ knowing whether it was of any military value. That was a one-shot.

But a continuing disinformation program that this country's intelligence people promoted over a long period during that war backfired. It was billed as a "mobile underground radio station" operating inside Nazi Germany and broadcasting daily defiance to Hitler. Monitored by an Allied listening post, the translated texts were distributed to U.S. newspapers and received considerable attention. The Gestapo wasn't fooled; but the program did give false hope to American families who were led to believe that the Hitler regime might be on the verge of collapse.

One of the most secret U.S. black propaganda programs, however, was effective, and Americans weren't aware of it until decades after the war. It was the brainchild of an intelligence agent named Eugene Warner, who had been a Washington newspaperman. Under Mr. Warner's supervision at a secret Allied installation in Rome, the OSS — precursor of the CIA — was turning out a one-page newspaper called Das Neue Deutschland, which purported *to be an underground anti-Hitler* newspaper published and distributed inside Germany.

Under tight security, it was printed on cheap paper that might be available to a subversive group, with an odd assortment of type. There was one seemingly insurmountable problem in this project, which any newspaper publisher could have alerted Mr. Warner to: home delivery.

Mr. Warner came up with a brilliant plan. Telephone directories of the large German cities were collected, and mailing lists were prepared from each. German stamps were counterfeited; German-type mail pouches were duplicated to the last stitch. Envelopes were printed with return addresses of German business establishments likely to make large mailings to private homes.

The envelopes were addressed, stamped, properly canceled and into them went "The New Germany"; the envelopes were stuffed into mail sacks. Railway timetables were studied, and every day fighter-bombers took off on the hunt for a railroad train heading toward a specific German city.

When the quarry was spotted, one element swooped down and loosed demolition bombs on locomotive and cars. After them came B-25s at treetop level, machine guns blazing away to keep surviving heads down, and from their bomb bays came hundreds of mail sacks, strewn among the wreckage.

Unfailingly, rescue crews, with German efficiency, gathered up the scattered mail and turned it over to the post office.

Mr. Warner won a bronze star and a presidential citation. More important to him was learning later that advancing Allied troops reported that Germans were surrendering with copies of this newspaper to show that they were anti-Nazis. That was disinformation's finest hour. And I'd like to think its only one.

(Joseph Laitin is ombudsman of The Washington Post.)

Disinformation At The Top

Philip Geyelin

LOOK! Up in the sky! It's a gas mask! It's a radar screen! It's an insurance policy! It's SUPER-DOME!

Whatever else may be said of Ronald Reagan's bootless campaign to save the Senate for the Republicans, his efforts to make a winning issue of the Strategic Defense Initiative (a.k.a. "Star Wars") cannot be faulted for lack of creative imagery. That SDI was a factor of little or no consequence in the elections is beside the point. What matters is the collateral damage that the President was doing to public comprehension of a vital national security issue.

You have to credit the President for making his case. The polls showed overwhelming support for his refusal to bargain away any part of his "Star Wars" dream at Reykjavik. What the pollsters' samplings do not show, however, is what on earth (never mind outer space) the Republican faithful had in mind when they greeted the President chanting "S . . . D . . .I" at campaign rallies.

Has the American public bought the President's dream of a sure-thing shield against nuclear weapons that will rid the world for ever of the threat of nuclear war? And why not, when one scarcely knows how to begin to deal with the President's out-of-this-world flim-flam.

In Grand Forks, North Dakota, he likened SDI to the British development of radar before World War II: He couldn't "help but think that giving up SDI (in Iceland) would have been like Chamberlain giving up radar, as well as Czechoslovakia, at Munich." Leaving aside the fact that radar was not on the bargaining table at Munich, it was a reality. That's not something that can be said today of SDI.

At another point, the President said he had told Gorbachev that SDI was like "keeping our gas masks, even though the nations of the world had outlawed poison gas after World War I." Presumably he did not remind Gorbachev that the great powers went right on manufacturing and stockpiling chemical weapons, that huge supplies are in the hands of NATO forces as well as those of the Warsaw Pact, and that gas masks are by no means a foolproof defense against the use of poison gas.



In Colorado Springs, he told a political rally that, "If and when we have developed (SDI) . . . we will then appeal to the Soviet Union to join us in eliminating all the strategic and intermediate-range nuclear missiles and then we will share SDI with them so that we can both go down through the years without having to be suspicious of each other."

Now that suggests a pretty high level of trust. But the President *also offered quite a different concept* of SDI as an "insurance policy" against Soviet cheating. "No responsible President should rely solely on a piece of paper for his country's safety," the President said. "We can either bet on American technology to keep us safe, or on Soviet promises. I'll bet on American technology any day."

Explicit, in everything the President has said since he launched SDI in a famous speech on March 23, 1983, has been the promise of perfection. Yet Lt. Gen. Daniel O. Graham (ret.), who heads a "Coalition for the Strategic Defense Initiative," concedes that "any strategic defense deployment will start with a partial and porous defense no matter how much total protection it eventually will provide."

Two years ago, Lt. Gen. James Abrahamson, director of the SDI project, told a House of Appropriations Committee that, "Nowhere have we stated that the goal of the SDI is to come up with a leak-proof defense." George Kenworth, science advisor to the President, insisted in 1984 that, "The SDI has never promised . . . absolute perfection and the President would never propose such a bold step if only perfection would suffice."

Abrahamson and James have apparently not talked to Secretary of Defense Weinberger, who told "Meet the Press" in March, 1983: "The defensive systems that the *President is talking* about are not designed to be partial. What we want to try to get is a system which will develop a defense that is thoroughly reliable and total . . . and I don't see any reason why that can't be done."

Neither, obviously, does Ronald Reagan. But the fact is that nobody can tell you now what a nuclear defense system will ever amount to, or how much it will cost, or whether the Soviets could devise techniques for outwitting it.

Finding the right answers is going to be an extraordinarily difficult job, requiring serious, informed debate. That process is endangered when the President takes the occasion of a congressional election campaign to conduct a program of disinformation that makes the notorious number done on Libya's Colonel Gadhafi last summer look like little white lies.

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Red light for danger

EVEN in these days of glasnost (openness) in the Soviet press, with the once-forbidden topics of air crashes and ship collisions being reported alongside the corruption trials, the decision to air certain topics still comes as a shock.

Komsomolskaya Pravda is the official newspaper of the Young Communist League, and its long story headlined, "A lady for a tip" raised many an eyebrow. Set in the Byelorussian capital of Minsk, it recounted the stories of Svetlana, who sold her favours to the foreigners in the local Intourist hotel, and of Nina who ran a small brothel in a nearby apartment.

The main thrust of the article was to complain that in the absence of any Soviet law against prostitution, there was little social pressure that could be brought.

"Evidently there is no sense in agonising over the social reasons for this phenomenon," they had written. "It is not poverty that makes these girls chase after their dubious clients. The majority of these 'business women' have a reasonably good education, some are fluent in foreign languages. Each one of them could be working for the good of society."

In the old days, they would try to remain anonymous, and when caught would promise never to do it again. But with the passing of time, this coyness has gone. They feel quite invulnerable, because they are breaking no laws. They exchange nods with the hotel doormen and greet the policemen in a friendly manner. In the hotel, the bar, and the restaurant, they know everyone and everyone knows them. There is simply no public censure.

When the police bother to intervene, there are two laws they can use against the girls. The first is the law against being a social parasite, or against being unemployed. So the girls make sure they have a daytime sinecure, whether as a student or in a factory or shop where they can bribe the managers into turning a blind eye to their absences.

The second is the law against dealing in foreign currency. The girls Komsomolskya Pravda is worried about are those who go with foreigners, and get their pay in dollars, finnmarks and pounds. Prostitution among Russians, which is widespread and visible in the big naval cities like Murmansk and Odessa, and around the hostels where Moscow's migrant workers live, has yet to emerge in the press as a social problem.

The odd thing about the article was why it chose to focus on Minsk, which is not on the main route for western tourists or businessmen. Moscow provides far more glaring examples.

By Martin Walker in Moscow

It can be embarrassing, for example, for Western women to try to go alone into the big hotels for foreigners. Unless they show a hotel residency card or a passport, they are liable to be turned away by the doorman, who will assume they are amateur whores.

The professionals are recognised and admitted, although I have on occasion seen the purple flash as a 25 rouble note changes hands. They dress well, in Western clothes brought in by their regulars, or bought in the hard currency stores. Many of them are stunningly attractive. Their hard sell and aggressive approach makes a quiet drink in these bars almost impossible. Prices, I am told, range from $50 to $100, and more for twosomes and special services.

The problem is that the price does not include the film and recording rights. Only a fool would ever assume that these hotel liaisons take place without an interested audience, or that the girls do not co-operate with the authorities when pressured to do so. There was the famous case of Commander "Gunboat" Courtney, whose parliamentary career collapsed when photographs of his amorous adventure in a Moscow hotel suddenly appeared in the post of his constituency chairman.

There are other ways of applying pressure. A colleague of mine, a former Newsweek correspondent here, was suddenly informed by the foreign ministry that the Moscow VD clinic had been given his name as a contact by a hotel prostitute, and under Soviet law he had to be given a medical check and treatment.

Proclaiming his innocence to his embassy, he took the first plane to Frankfurt, had himself thoroughly checked there, and sent the papers proving his innocence, or at least his non-infection, back to Moscow.

He then flew on to New York, to explain to his employers why this had to be seen as a nasty attempt to discredit a thrusting and aggressive reporter, and to explain to his wife, who was having their first baby. Not as bad as the Daniloff case, but a reminder that even gonorrhoea can be conscripted into the service of the Soviet state.

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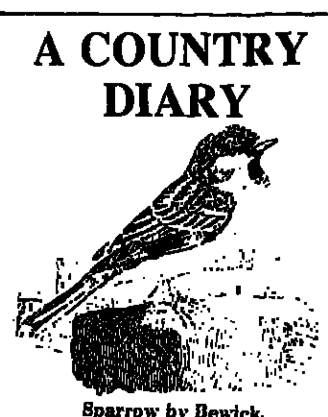
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A COUNTRY DIARY



Sparrow by Bewick.

WIMBLEDON COMMON: Sparrows are frequently overlooked. I have heard sensible people say, "No, I didn't see anything" upon returning from a walk which was alive with sparrows, but lacked sparrow hawks. At this time of year the sparrows visually reflect autumn in their various carefully marked coats. They have the rich chestnut which glows from the beech leaves. The wing edges of the female hold the fawn of the dying grasses which provide the setting for all our autumnal forays. The combination of the browns is an echo of the leaves whilst the darkest colours remind us of the black wet tree trunks, not reflecting light, simply oozing darkness.

If you stop at the Windmill Cafe the sparrows put on an Oliver Twist performance of gregarious eating. Wasps are still around driven into rubbish bins and loitering lazily about. Their yellow picks up the luminous floating quality of the lime trees that still retain some leaves, The changing colours are pegged down by stands of glossy holly bushes and Scots and Corsican pine trees. The heather has burnt itself out into a soft brown. Yarrow and Pineappleweed are still showing bedraggled flowers. The birds were quietly keeping together. Flocks of chaffinches and tits flittered in the trees whilst the green woodpecker laughed at the world, his colours blending with the remaining green leaves. The jays were conducting one of their mysterious unsettling convocations. There was none of the spring excitement. Instead a quiet purposeful flight and intent searchings of the ground. Acorns appeared to be their chief booty.

In the garden I have had to saw down a 23 foot silver birch. Six years ago it appeared by one of the ponds. The stump demonstrates how quickly they grow. The tits will miss it as much as I. The swashbuckling greenfinches are happier to swing around the fruits of the Rugosa rubiflora.

Audrey Insch

Downland without plough and people

SOMEONE gave me a splendid old map, dated 1773, of a corner of England featuring my native village, which I call Nadderbourne. My chief surprise was how up-to-date it was. It could serve as a plan of the village today, apart from the fact that we have many more houses. The High Street, The Green, Church Lane, Black Lane, the little back road known as Boye Hedges, the Bottom Way, the Hollow, all are exactly as they are now.

Our village lies on the frontier between forest and downland. The shape and the boundaries of the woodland have altered hardly at all. The names of the various coppices are familiar to me, and I could find my way through them easily by following the tracks shown on this meticulously drawn map. The only feature I can find that I previously knew nothing about is a neatly drawn sketch of a hill-top windmill.

On the downland side of the village, however, all is changed. The main London road, traversed by stage coaches, is recognisable, but all other tracks are marked by dotted lines, indicating that they were unfenced, unhedged, and doubtfully permanent. I am reminded of the old downland track from Salisbury to the village of Whitsbury which, a hundred years ago, was marked at intervals by a series of small pyramids of chalk, called "chalk lights". On winter nights the light from the flickering oil-lamps on the carrier's cart faintly illuminated the next cone as he drew abreast of one, thus preventing him from getting lost on the downs. And more than one village in these parts has a tradition of legacies devoted to the ringing of church bells at dusk, for the benefit of travellers wandering on the downs.

Several events subsequent to 1773, when this map was drawn, transformed the downland scene, at least temporarily. During the wars with Napoleon the need for more home-produced food required much of the downland to be cultivated. Then in 1819 an enclosure act carved up an area of what were apparently open fields on the downland side of the village. Some of the hawthorn hedges then planted still mark the boundaries of farms, but they are very different from the broad hedges of mixed bushes which form a network on the forest side of the parish and are, in 1819, noted as "Ancient Enclosures".

By the end of the century, however, much of this new apportionment of land was obsolete. Under the impact of vast imports of grain from the new lands overseas most of fields created when Napoleon's memory was still green were abandoned, and the downs reverted to their former status. As I remember them, once one had climbed the winding hill road out of the village the hedges and the fields ended and nothing but derelict downland undulated away to the horizon. Tracks were superfluous. You took your bearings by the sun and struck out in approximately the right direction.

That is how I remember the downs in the 1920s and 1930s, and what a paradise for wild life they were! For one thing, they were populated by millions of rabbits, their numbers hardly affected by occasional shooting and trapping. Their constant nibbling kept the fibrous turf short, creating ideal conditions for the wild thyme, harebells, milkwort, eyebright, rock-roses, orchids and all the other lowly downland flowers.

In abandoned rabbit holes wheatears nested. Shrikes impaled beetles on convenient thorn-bushes. Stone curlews returned each March to nest in sufficient numbers to form flocks of 50 to 70 birds when they were collecting for autumn migration. For me as a boy the carolling in chorus of these curlews in the gathering dusk was the authentic voice of the downs.

Then the second world war required the reclamation of these derelict lands, as in the days of Napoleon. Once again the plough did its work and this time it has not subsequently retreated. Chemical fertilizers, chemical sprays, improved varieties of farm crops and powerful machinery which makes nonsense of distance have made it possible to grow superlative crops of barley and even of wheat and other crops on the high downs. There are no ancient hedges to interface with cultivation, the downland scrub has been bulldozed away, and the fields are now units of hundreds of acres, of monoculture.

But there are exceptions. In the area of my 1773 map the Government in 1912 acquired about 7,000 acres of downland for use by the Army. An adequate ring-fence was erected to keep people out; the few farms within it were demolished; and no plough has been admitted ever since. From time to time Army tanks trundle over the downs, and certain areas are pock-marked with shell-holes. For all I know, other military activities take place there, too.

By Ralph Whitlock

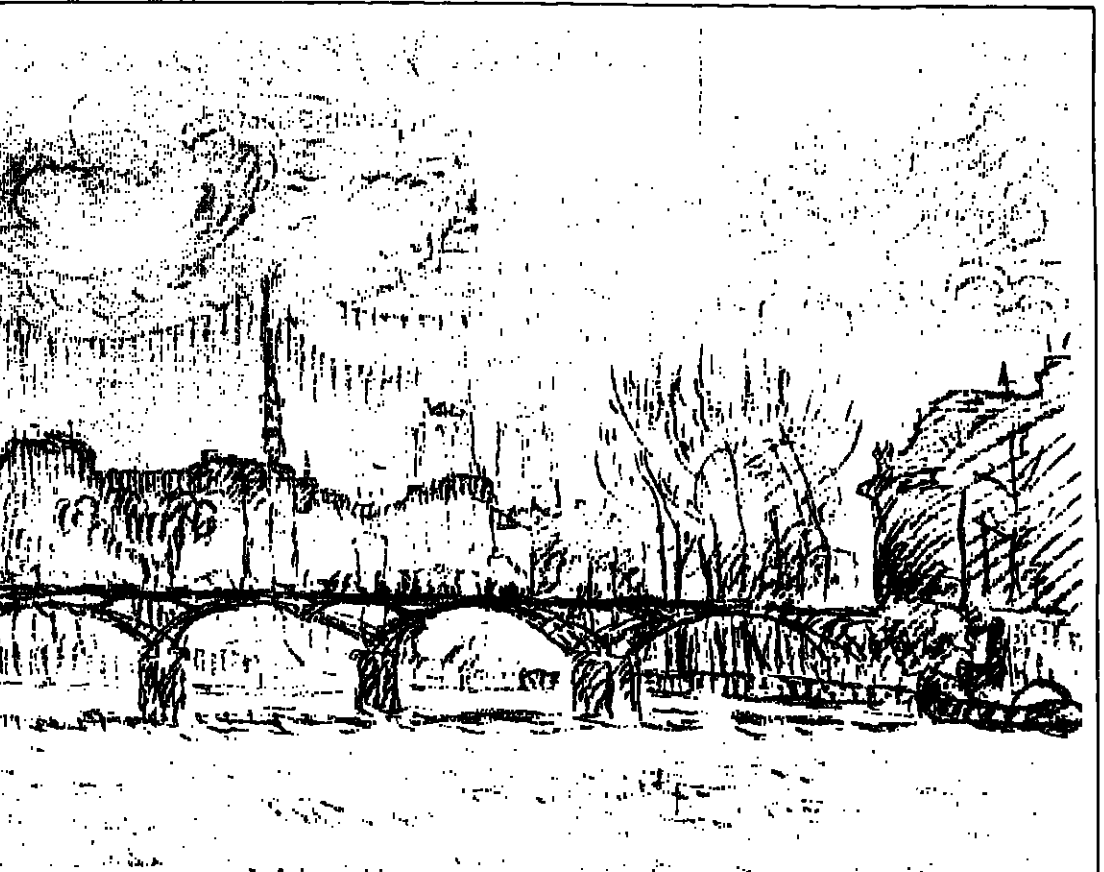
Recently I was invited to look over the ranges, and spent a happy Sunday afternoon inspecting them on foot and by Landrover. For me it was a nostalgic experience, for here were the downs, just as I remembered them, fifty or sixty years ago. An immensity of rolling hills and hidden hollows; thickets of berry-laden bushes; constellations of rabbit-burrows; gnarled old junipers; turf almost as springy as a trampoline; and never a building nor a soul in sight, all the afternoon.

Although the season for downland flowers was almost over I found scores of those paper-like carline thistles, now so rare, and autumn gentians, devil's-bit scabious, viper's bugloss and other chalk-loving plants I used to know so well. It was evident that earlier there had been a good crop of helleborines and other orchids. Wheatears had been nesting in the rabbit-holes, and eight out of nine pairs of stone-curlews were reported to have bred. Several species of butterflies, including chalk-hill blues, were flitting about.

My guide was enthusiastic about the status of his ranges as a nature reserve, and, having exerienced what had happened to the downs all around his perimeter fence, I agreed with him. "If the Army had not claimed them," I said, "all these acres would now be growing magnificent crops of barley . . . and adding to the grain mountain!"

So perhaps that would be the alternative to farm crops which everybody is looking for. Turn the surplus acres over to the Army. For there can be little doubt that no plough and no public equals paradise for wild life!

Letters to the Editor are welcomed but not all can be acknowledged. We don't like cutting them but sometimes this is necessary to get them in the page — short letters stand a better chance. Send them to The Guardian Weekly, PO Box 19, Cheadle, Cheshire SK8 1DD England.



Le Pont des Arts, Paris (c1919).

Past with flying colours

Paul Signac was the chief theorist of the Neo-Impressionists who broke the rules himself. His colours captivated Matisse and influence painters today. Michael McNay reports on the first exhibition of his work in this country for 30 years.

SEURAT was too good an artist not to have made a success of the confining colour rules of Neo-Impressionism. Signac was too good an artist not to have broken away from them.

Seurat is remembered for great pointillist set pieces like La Grande Jatte. Signac's principal painted contribution to the theory of Neo-Impressionism was the extravagantly titled and faintly absurd Portrait of M. Felix Feneon Against The Enamel of a Background Rhythmic with Beats and Angles, Tones and Colours (1890). He also wrote a book called From Delacroix To Neo-Impressionism. But if he had never met Seurat and never become the movement's principle theorist, he would still have painted wonderfully well.

When he met Seurat in 1884 he was 21 and already painting with pointillist enthusiasm. Though Seurat was deeply involved in scientific theories of the interaction of complementary colours, it was the untutored Signac who persuaded him to drop earth colours from his palette. later Signac's use of colours was to captivate Matisse.

From the collection of watercolours and drawings gathered together at the Marlborough, you can see why. Signac lived until 1935 and painted until the end, without significant development. His paintings became more literal-minded, that is all. The Marlborough acquired a body of work from Signac's daughter, and have since added to that corpus so that this exhibition of studies, many never seen in public before, covers the half-century span of his career.

It starts with a conte crayon study made in 1885, the year after he met Seurat, and it might be mistaken for one of Seurat's own. In 1885 itself they both met Pissarro. They persuaded Pissarro to adopt divisionism; Pissarro persuaded Signac of the beneficial properties of watercolour: "je vous recommande l'aquarelle, c'est tres precieux, tres practique," he wrote to Signac, and went on to extol the fugitive effects possible in the medium. Signac needed no second urging.

The most glorious of the little watercolours in this show is a rendering of St Tropez of around 1900, all high-keyed oranges and yellows offset by the cool blues of boats and reflections in the harbour. Matisse, who had read Signac's apologia for divisionism, came to stay with Signac in 1904.

What he got from the book no one knows. What he took from Signac's painting is there for all to see. And its effect on colour field painting to this day has been more widespread than any other innovation in the art of the last hundred years.

The Impressionists and their immediate successors have often enough been called the painters of the urban bourgeoisie, but it was at least as true that water was their element; water, the mirror of light and air.

Water came as naturally to Signac as to the fish in St Tropez harbour; water, watercolour, pencil and ink. The drawings of Paris are wonderfully acute, rhythmic, concise; the accents of trees against the arches of the Pont Neuf, the towers of Notre Dame, the spire signified by a single stroke, firm as a drumbeat, economical as calligraphy.

One of Signac's unlikelier influences was Van Gogh, if only because the Dutchman introduced him to Japanese prints. Van Gogh's influence is much plainer in the work of Karel Appel. Appel, born in Amsterdam in 1921, professes the prime influence of Picasso, but it is Van Gogh who is balefully present.

Appel was a founder-member in 1949 of Cobra (Copenhagen, Brussels, Amsterdam) which got lost in the later enthusiasm for the American school of abstract expressionism. In 1977 Appel himself moved to New York. He was never a forgotten man exactly, but it was probably enthusiasm for the new figurative painting that has once again made him a big Appel to a wider public.

So maybe the comparisons that are made with the younger men like Kiefer are inevitable and a little unfair to both parties. Kiefer and company are tremendous naturals; Appel, for all the gut appeal, is much more calculating; as a consequence the big political gestures, the subject matter embracing war and hunger come across as grandiose rather than deeply felt. Picasso's greatest painting was not Guernica, not by a long shot; but it had more real bottom than all Appel put together.

Yet is it extraordinary that after the realities of Belsen, Hiroshima, and Vietnam in living colour Appel feels able to face up to these subjects at all. A triptych like War And Hunger (1983) seems all overworked cliche: garish flames and artillery piece to the left, an ashen heap to the right, in the centre skull-like pleading heads and dishes held out Oliver-Twist fashion. But the attack and the scale are pretty — no, horribly — convincing: maybe Appel needed to make the great humane statements if only to get started.

But big gestures don't necessarily make big paintings; and silly though the comparison may be, it is to hand: Signac 6½ inch by 10 inch St Tropez is a better painting than Appel's 6½ft by 17ft War and Hunger.

Paul Signac watercolours and drawings at the Marlborough Gallery, 6 Albermarle Street, London W1, until December 31.

Karel Appel paintings 1980-5 at the Arnolfini Gallery, Narrow Quay, Bristol, until January 4.

Tales of the unexpected

CINEMA by Derek Malcolm

"MOVIES are a combination of sound and pictures, and stories are a trick to get you to keep paying attention." It could just be a statement from Jean-Luc Godard, but in fact the words come from David Byrne of Talking Heads. *True Stories,* his debut film, is as good as its word. It is an entirely new kind of musical, probably well ahead of it time.

Set in Virgil, Texas, and based on newspaper and magazine articles, it attempts to get the feel of the place and the people by meshing their stories together, illustrating them with songs and looking at the resultant human landscape with insatiably curious eyes. I've absolutely no idea how many people will like the film because there has been nothing like it before and, if it fails, there may not be again. My advice is simply to taste it and see.

True Stories, at any rate, has two great virtues. The first is that it never tells you what to think so that you can make up your own mind. And the second is that its portrait of Texas resolutely refuses to go down the easy road of finding the place eccentrically larger than life. The fat man who wants love, the rich woman who lies in bed all day watching television and being fed by a mechanical spoon, and the all-metal houses you can buy off the peg as you would a suit are observed as if they were quite ordinary — as probably they are in these parts.

The Talking Heads' songs themselves tune into their surroundings, using the different kinds of indigenous music, like gospel, cumbia, country and western, and even polkas to maximum effect. The photography, by Ed Lachman, tries to get the feel of the light, the colours, the sky, and the arid open spaces.

Byrne himself is a kind of benignly ironic commentator, mostly at the wheel of his car, scudding down the highways which he says are the chief mark of this civilisation. He seems to like what he sees, while regretfully admitting that some may not. And his film, like a sketch book drawing on familiar American artists and writers, as well as his own thoughts, is the opposite of presumptuous.

True Stories ends with the lyric: "We live in the city of dreams, we drive on the highway of fire, should we awake, and find it gone, remember this, our favourite town." There's not much doubt that we will.

Hot on the heels of its London Festival showing, Joyce Chopra's *Smooth Talk* arrives at the Renoir, justly heralded as the most intriguing debut featured from America this year. Based on a story by Joyce Carol Oates, called Where Are You Going, Where Have You Been? it is as delicate and convincing a study of adolescence as we've seen for some time.

At first you think it is just another youth movie as Connie, a 15-year-old Californian, quarrels with her parents, cavorts through a shopping mall with her friends and daydreams with the mirror in front of her, practising an unconvincing sophistication. Only this time, you notice the kind of observation that gets further under the skin than most youth movies ever attempt.

This is a suburban girl with a careless hatred for everything that gets in the way of the main object in her life; which is to draw attention to herself by every possible means. Connie, superbly played by Laura Dern, is a child who looks like an adult and can't think of how to behave like one. And Chopra watches her with icy fascination.

So, too, does Treat Williams's equally icy Arnold who, halfway through the film, arrives at her house in his custom-built car and proceeds to seduce her. Dimly, she knows what he's doing but, like a moth round a flame, cannot resist being burnt.

It's this long sequence which is the fulcrum of the film, and it relies on almost everything the modern American film is frightened of — words, glances, the building of atmosphere without action and a kind of moral force that pushes it beyond mere realism.

The film is in many ways a beautiful one, with cool, limpid photography from James Glennon and a screenplay by Tom Oole that pays the original author considerable tribute. It is about that point in time when the young suddenly grow up and see the corruption of the world. It is also about the force that's in all of us to test out what we can get away with, to reach out and be damned.

Chopra is clearly a talent it would be very unwise to ignore as is Oates whose volume of short stories from which this was taken is called Wild Saturday and published here by J. M. Dent.

OVERSEAS PROJECT STAFF

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Sweet taste of Shandy

Nicholas de Jongh on a joyous production at Oxford

LAURENCE STERNE'S Tristram Shandy effortlessly swims "down the gutter of time" from the eighteenth century and into our own where it seems far more at home. Sterne threw off the novelist's traditional costumes of ominscience, order and articulate form for a great game of free association, in which the narrator tries to write the story of his life and finds it a mysterious wilderness where he and his family loom, flash and ruminate.

The form and atmosphere of the novel is admirably suited to the theatre and Peter Buckman's new adaptation, although necessarily condensed, distils the manner and method of the original. In Richard Williams's production Michael Holt's stage design, with its toylike, cardboard cut-outs and the frame and interiors of two clock faces, conveys the right mood of artifice and childlike playfulness.

What emerges, perhaps predictably, is the sense of jovial, discursive eccentrics playing life as if it were a sport and of Tristram Shandy, a narrator manipulating his characters as if they were puppets who found wills of their own.

Cock and bull bawdy, if one can so describe salacious tall stories, is the most accentuated device. Up a flight of stairs, where a bed is rapidly concealed from view by a falling drape, the night-capped Mr and Mrs Shandy noisily go about the business of creating Tristram.



Michael Turner as Mr Shandy.

And from the window of this room comes a bolt from the blue when the five-year old Tristram is accidentally circumcised in a manner which defies description and from which our eyes are sensibly averted.

A miniature garden with topiary, where gentle Uncle Toby and Jim McManus, gorgeously deadpan as his servant Trim, romp and fight old battles, becomes the scene for artful salacity where Toby's wounded groin, the importuning of the Widow Wadman and an undercover apologia for masturbatory techniques are all described in language of elegant circumlocution.

Dr Slop, the jovially incompetent medicine man, and the ever agitated maid are stock examples of comic warfare compared with the pompous Mr Shandy, deep in the realms of fantastical speculations upon the bridges of human noses. But the fragmentary random jollities prove to be bracing, endearing and delightful.

In Richard Williams' production there are times when the pace lags a little and Donald Pelmear's Uncle Toby seems a little too close to caricature. But David Mallinson's bewigged and suave Tristram presides over the evening like a deft elegant master of ceremonies delighted by the width and wanderings of his "play" and Michael Turner's Mr Shandy is a majestic fountain of absurdities.

The occasion provides a rare kind of pleasure — of the sort we discover when the life of a novel is recreated upon the stage.

The production visits Aberystwyth, Taunton and Poole.

Literary frog prince

By Julian Symons

EVELYN WAUGH: THE EARLY YEARS, 1903-1939, by Martin Stannard (Dent, £14.95).

EVELYN WAUGH was in various ways a peculiarly unpleasant man. He was the most obvious kind of snob, detesting the middle-class ambience into which he had been born, and seeking out the rich and influential. Eager for self-advertisement obtained through the gossip columns written by his friends, touting constantly for journalistic assignments, he had the nerve to say that journalism was too low a profession for an English gentleman. A novice in poetry, he condescended to the finest poets of his generation.

In later years he insulted friends, made drunken scenes, put a sign on the gate of his country house saying nobody would be admitted on business. "A common little man who happens to have written one or two moderately amusing novels"; such was Duff Cooper's summing up, made in Waugh's presence.

A prime merit of Martin Stannard's account of Waugh's life from birth up to the War (a second volume to come) is that, without blinking the bowler-hatted clubman awfulness, he makes one end up feeling sorry for Evelyn Waugh, admiring his tenacity, even finding him sympathetic.

Waugh's childhood was marred by his father's evident preference for elder brother Alec, an all-round sportsman and passionately keen cricketer. Evelyn, uninterested in sport, became an aggressive aesthete. Intended for his father's and brother's school, Sherborne, Evelyn had to settle for Lancing College instead, after Alec was asked to leave Sherborne because of homosexual activities.

At Lancing he helped to found a Dilettanti Society and a Corpse Club "for those weary of life," and brought home the kind of effeminate arty bachelor friend his father disliked. His record of drinking, homosexuality, and generally outrageous behaviour at Oxford is recorded in Waugh's own Diaries, although, Mr Stannard suggests, with some exaggeration.

In part, Waugh's conduct was directed against his father, a middle-class, middle-brow, and generally middling managing director of a publishing firm. "How I detest this house and how ill I feel in it," he said in his twenties when

Evelyn Waugh

staying in the family's villa in Golders Green. But he was also striving with the utmost seriousness from Lancing days onwards to be an artist.

"An artist must be a reactionary," he said towards the end of his life, and his own finest novels are the work of an intellectual reactionary who was a wonderfully skilful and original literary technician, but also a damaged human being.

How deeply damaged this biography shows. Painfully aware of his red face, shortness (height five foot five, bourgeois background, comparative poverty, Waugh longed for the love of rich, beautiful girls. Rejection was frequent — Lady Diana Cooper, who liked him, said he was "the frog people can't endure." Rejection made him rude, turned him to drink, sent him off to write commissioned books about travels in Abyssinia, Tanganyika, the Belgian Congo.

Reception in 1930 into the Catholic church perhaps kept him from suicide or insanity, but he remained a sad man, yearning always for action as a salve for dark thoughts.

This will without doubt be the standard biography, replacing Christopher Sykes's now slightly outdated work, and various memoirs.

Would Waugh have liked the book? Almost certainly not. He might have concluded that candid biography, like journalism, is not an occupation for an English gentleman.

Oedipus at the Cocteau party

Michael Billington reviews The Infernal Machine at Hammersmith

AN APOCALYPTIC Thirties doom hangs over Hammersmith. A few hundred yards from Shaw's Too True To Be Good at the Riverside Studios, Jean Cocteau's The Infernal Machine (1934) is given a rare, exotic revival by Simon Callow at the Lyric. Both plays suffer from garrulity but both are filled with a sense of impending destruction and an hallucinatory quality that says a lot about the flight from realism in the inter-war years.

Cocteau's play, a mix of high tragedy and high camp, is a re-telling of the Oedipus myth largely from Jocasta's point of view. The weakness of the play is that Cocteau never seems quite sure what he thinks. Reversing the inherent justice of Greek tragedy, he shows men in relation to the gods as flies to wanton boys: killed for sport. Yet, at the same time, the youthfully arrogant Oedipus is transformed by suffering from "a playing-card king" into a man. The play is also haunted by a sense of sexual confusion so that mother-fixation is both idealised ("Is there a couple more proud of themselves than a son and a young mother?") and rigorously punished when it leads to incest.

Constructed like an opiate dream, parts of the play now seem poppy Cocteau, in particular the second act, in which the Sphinx (well played by Veronica Smart as a slip of a girl in a girlish slip) voluntarily yields her secret to Oedipus.

Ironically, Cocteau's play is strongest when it is most derivative: in the first act which is like a joky re-play of the battlement-scene in Hamlet with the ghost of Lauis hourly expected, and in the fourth act which gets back to Sophoclean basics. The overall impression is of a hothouse period-piece which suggests that, in the modern as much as the classical world, man is the victim of a cruel and arbitrary fate.

Whatever the play's imperfections, I am still glad to have seen it; and the casting of Maggie Smith (as both Jocasta and a

Maggie Smith in Cocteau.

Theban mother) is a cunning stroke since she has the rare ability to move from nasal camp to real emotion with no visible change of gear. Drawling and drooling over a young guard in the first act ("Ooh look at those biceps") she is extremely funny; yet she also gets across the point that Jocasta's dream of youth wills the tragedy. Ms Smith, with a voice that can swoop like a bat or be pure as ice, exists simultaneously in the world of a Cocteau party and classical tragedy: in the final act tiny movements to her gold-coin profile tell us all we need to know about Jocasta's suicidal horror.

Her performance alone is worth the detour. But Simon Callow also rightly swathes the piece in a florid, Benthallesque theatricality. Bruno Santini's designs begin startingly with a smoke-wreathed precipitous flight of stairs evoking Gordon Craig and end with a bare, stark platform. Kevin Malpass's soundtrack also gives us the full aural works from echoing trumpets to what might be the murmur of innumerable bees.

The actors, to their credit, remain unswamped with Lambert Wilson lending Oedipus a gauche, youthful confidence, Robert Eddison playing Tiresias like an over-protective mother-hen and Neil Cunningham appearing as a suave Cocteauesque commentator telling us what is going to happen before it does.

The play often tests one's patience: the production rewards it. And while Cocteau lacks tragic depth, his warning about the dangers of a society hungry for "strong men" suddenly cuts through the camp and rings true after half-a-century.

Gandhi's banker

By Tariq Ali

THE EMISSARY, by Alan Ross (Collins/Harvill. £14).

THE GIANT trading houses of Birla and Tata have dominated Indian industry since the early years of this century. It is tempting to see them as the Indian equivalent of Ford and Rockefeller, but the analogy is more partial than most. Birla and Tata constructed their commercial empires under the watchful eyes of their British rivals.

This book is an interesting, albeit uncritical, account of a crucial phase in the life of India and G. D. Birla. Unlike every other land occupied by the British, India had a highly developed trading caste. Without the tariff barriers and other restrictions imposed by colonialism, there is little doubt that industrialisation would have proceeded at a rapid pace, multiplying the creation of wealth and the wealthy.

This did not happen. Dwarfed against their will, India's capitalists had little option but to become a nationalist bourgeoisie, which saw in the Congress Party a political vehicle that could champion its interests against those of imperialism.

Birla's lifelong friendship with Gandhi was totally genuine (it was in Birla's Delhi mansion that the Mahatma was brutally slain by a Hindu fanatic), but it was also deeply symbolic, and helped to determine the shape of pre-independence politics.

Birla was one of the most shrewd and insightful capitalists of the twentieth century. When his fellow members of the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FICCI) wanted publicly to attack and isolate Nehru and split the Congress, Birla's strategic insights proved decisive.

Nehru was in 1935-6 at his most radical. He was arguing that a free India would dispense with the captains of industry and embark on a socialist course. Birla's fellow-capitalists were apoplectic. Their leader explained to them patiently that a split between Gandhi and Nehru would be a gigantic disaster for FICCI and its interests. Their future was best guaranteed by a tamed Nehru, who would prove to be as vital in the post-independence phase as Gandhi has been in the struggle which led up to freedom. Birla said all this in the thirties!

Birla, a broker by profession and heredity, belonged to the Marwari caste which still dominates the Bombay stock exchange. Unlike his colleagues he also became a political broker: an important mediator between the colonial state and Gandhi and between Gandhi and Nehru. He financed the Congress and Gandhi. The waspish Sarojini Naidu (poet and Congress leader) once remarked that Birla's millions were necessary to keep Gandhi in the poverty to which he was accustomed. There was more than a grain of truth in the witticism.

Alan Ross's book contains most of this information, but for a poet's book it is a somewhat dry read, bereft of life and colour. This is a great pity because both the subject and the period lack neither.

Gorbachev's Russia — not quite Camelot on ice

THE WAKING GIANT: The Soviet Union in the Gorbachev Era, by Martin Walker (Michael Joseph, £12.95).

David Owen reviews a book on Russia by Martin Walker

MOST readers of the Guardian I suspect, like myself, will be unaware that Martin Walker was only the third Guardian resident Moscow correspondent when he was appointed in 1984. (His distinguished predecessors were Arthur Ransome, best known for his children's books, and Malcolm Muggeridge). One happy result of his assignment is a book, *The Waking Giant*, which is highly readable, and could well serve as most people's Bedside Guardian Guide to Russia. For the book does actually tell one what Russia is, "a country that takes eight days to cross by train, a country so huge that night never completely falls, a country that contains over a hundred nationalities, speaking over a hundred different tongues."

It is also revealing in explaining Moscow's anxiety about the wave of Islamic fundamentalism lapping its own southern borders. "In 1940, the combined population of the six traditionally Muslim republics of Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Tadjikistan, Turkmenistan and Kirgizia was just 20 million. By 1985, it leaped to 52 million, and the birth rate of the southern republics soared far ahead of that of the white Slavs of the north. On current demographic trends, by the year 2000, 40 per cent of conscripts to the Soviet army will be Muslims."

It is only when one understands the immense diversity of modern Russia that one can appreciate the regional tensions and realise why the ruling Politburo are most unlikely to relax in any significant way the centralised authority so characteristic of Soviet Communism.

If you search for it in this book, there is a hard-headed assessment of Russian realities and warning messages for the average Guardian reader. For example: "There is a tendency in the West to assume that reformers are liberals. In the context of Soviet affairs, this is an unwise assumption. Although Andropov's career in the central committee under Khrushchev showed him to be an anti-Stalinist, and a man with sophisticated tastes in the arts, neither he nor any of his supporters was a liberal in any sense that the West would comprehend."

In the year that we remember the thirtieth anniversary of the bloody suppression of the Hungarian Uprising in which Andropov played such a key role, this is a timely warning.

But when it comes to discussing Mikhail Gorbachev, one detects that the author has been captivated, and indeed part of the charm of the book is the sense of hope that it gives for the future. Though he dismisses as "fanciful rambling" and a "bizarre parallel" the claim by one Gorbachev contemporary that they now had their Kennedy — he had gone on to say, "That's us. Moscow as Camelot. Camelot on ice" — one nevertheless is left wondering. There is, running through the book, the same mood music that characterised the writing out of Washington in the early part of the Kennedy Presidency.

If, as I believe, we are witnessing a profound change in Soviet attitudes, we should be very careful not to exaggerate the pace at which those attitudes will reveal themselves in a change of direction of Soviet policy. With the exception of arms control, where there is undoubtedly a marked readiness to think afresh — largely fuelled by anxiety over the domestic economic burden of continuing the arms race — change will be slow to emerge.

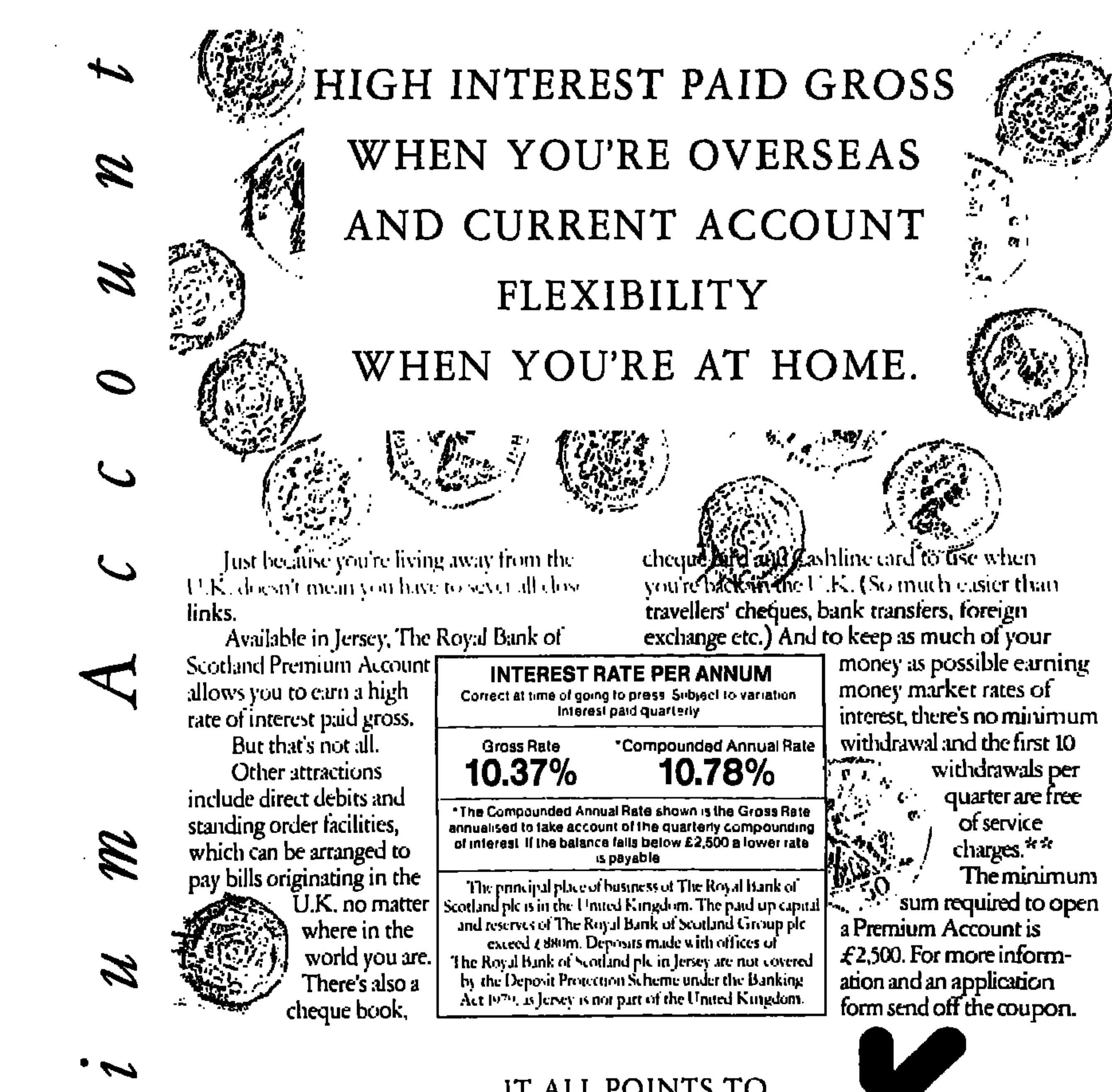
Yet this book does point us in the directions in which to expect change. Whether in describing Moscow's secondhand car market, the clampdown against corruption, the restructuring of the Foreign Office, or the role of women, one can sense that change is in the air. What the liberal-minded in the West need when approaching the Soviet Union is more knowledge.

This book undoubtedly helps to fill a big gap. But there are many gaps to fill. It was good to see (Guardian Weekly, November 2) Dr David Whitehouse describe in great detail the Soviet "Star Wars" programme. Many people believe that this only started with President Reagan, but in fact for more than a quarter of a century the Soviet Union has been increasing defences to blunt the effectiveness of any ballistic missile attack. The Soviet anti-satellite system has been under development for nearly 20 years.

It is this sort of duplicity that is commonplace when dealing with the Soviet Union. To virtually ignore this aspect, as this book does, is to miss a vital characteristic of Soviet society.

East/West relations are now going to improve. That is very welcome and the improvement could be far more dramatic than probably any of us realises. I have little doubt that before 1987 ends there will be a truly significant arms control agreement with the prospect of more to come. But negotiating with the Soviet Union will still require wariness and hard-headed realism.

Gorbachev does represent more than just a new image. But there are as many question marks as there are opportunities. As Martin Walker himself recognises, "The country went through a social revolution while Brezhnev slept. The wide-awake new leadership has to live with the consequences — and might just have the wisdom to enjoy them."



Chess

By Leonard Barden

No. 1933

White mates in three moves, against any defence (by R. F. Fegen, 1964) — a problem with a hidden trap.

Solution No. 1932

White K at KN7, Rs at Q5 and KN1, B at QB6, N at KR4, Ps at QB2, KB2, KR3 and KR5. Black K at K5, Q at QR3, N at QN2, Ps at QN3, QB6, K7, KB5 and KR3. Mate in three.

1 R-KB1 (threat 2 P-B3 ch and 3 N-N2) PxR(Q) 2 N-B3 and if KxN 3 R-Q2 or Q-N7 ch 3 R-N5. If 1 . . . P-B6 2 R-KN1 and 3 R-N4.

AFTER Kasparov v Karpov, the currently fashionable chess event is a super-tournament — highly rated, elitist, and confined to the very best players in the world. Bugojno in Yugoslavia set the trend in the Spring when it claimed the first category 16 event, with an average rating for the eight participants of 2628, equivalent to 253 on the BCF grading scale. Bugojno's organisers received adverse publicity when it was argued that they were not, after all, the first category 16 tournament, but their results still gained wide interest, notably because of Karpov's loss to the young Sokolov.

Now another heavyweight contender, the annual Interpolis Insurance event at Tilburg in Holland, has aimed to reassert its position as king of the super-tournaments. Tilburg, with an average rating of 2619, fell marginally short of category 16, but for an honourable reason. Their lowest rated player was Tony Miles (2570) but Miles won Tilburg 1984 and last year he brought the event global headlines when, with an injured back, he played stomach down on a hospital massage trolley.

Miles's opening round at Tilburg 1986 began with a much debated variation of the Queen's Indian Defence. Miles had lost an earlier game with this line, but now arrived at the board with a novelty so strong that Belyavsky resigned in under three hours play.

GM Tony Miles (England) — GM Alexander Belyavsky (USSR)
Queen's Indian Defence
(Interpolis, Tilburg 1986)

1 P-Q4 N-KB3	2 P-QB4 P-K3
3 N-KB3 P-QN3	4 N-B3 B-N5
5 B-N5 B-N2	6 P-K3 P-KR3
7 B-R4 P-KN4	8 B-N3 N-K5
9 Q-B2 P-Q3	10 B-Q3 BxN ch
11 PxB P-KB4	12 P-Q5 N-B4
13 P-KR4!	

This push, weakening Black's pawn front before opening up the centre, adds bite to White's strategy. In earlier games an immediate 13 N-Q4 Q-B3 14 P-B4 NPxP was less effective.

13 . . . P-N5 14 N-Q4 Q-B3
15 O-O NxB

In Kasparov-Timman, 4th match game 1985, and Miles-Timman, from a later round at Tilburg 1986, Black tried 15 . . . N(1)-R3, but this also proved favourable for White.

16 QxN P-K4 17 NxP B-B1

Now 18 P-K4 BxN 19 PxB N-Q2 favours Black, since White's pawns are dislocated and 20 P-B4 PxP ep 21 RxP O-O-O gives Black the KN file for his attack. In Kasparov-Timman, 6th game 1985, the sacrifice 18 N-Q4 PxN 19 BPxP Q-B4? 20 P-K4 did well, but Gligoric-Popovic, Yugoslav championship 1986, improved by 19 . . . O-O! 20 P-B3 Q-N2! with advantage for Black. However, Miles and Timman analysed the position further and came up with another improvement.

18 P-B4!

The right way to sacrifice the piece, since White now opens up the black king on several fronts.

18 . . . QxN	19 P-K4 Q-R4
20 PxP PxP	21 P-B5! K-Q1

An ingenious idea, artificial queen's side castling, but the attack is too strong.

22 P-Q6 Q-K1	23 PxP ch KxP
24 Q-Q5 N-B3	25 R-B7 ch B-Q2
26 QR-KB1 R-Q1	27 R(1)-B6 K-B1
28 PxP PxP	29 Q-N5 Resigns

The winning threat is 30 QxNP followed by RxN ch and Q-B7 mate.

Soviet grandmasters are resilient. Following this defeat, Belyavsky also lost his next game to Hubner, then rallied strongly. In the second half of the double-round event he beat Ljubojevic, Karpov and Korchnoi in successive rounds. Miles, in contrast, fell back.

After 12 of the 14 rounds at Tilburg scores were Belyavsky 7½, Ljubojevic 6½ (1 adj), Karpov 6 (1 adj), Hubner and Portisch 5½ (1 adj), Timman 5 (1 adj), Miles 4½ (1 adj), Korchnoi 4½.

Bridge

By Rixi Markus©

THE Casino at Deauville's *World* Bridge Festival comprises two weeks of exciting events, with hundreds of players making it part of their annual holiday. In the afternoons, there is a Vu-Graph contest for the Deauville Cup between four countries, this year the national squads of Austria, Belgium, Holland and France. Austria were the convincing winners; and the overall individual champion was Austria's Jan Fucik, who won most of the major events. Here is an ordinary hand which Fucik played very skilfully. Dealer South; love all.

NORTH
♠ K 8 2
♥ A J 10 4
♦ A 9 8
♣ Q 7 4

WEST
♠ 9 5
♥ 9 7 5 2
♦ Q 5
♣ K J 10 9 2

EAST
♠ J 10 4 3
♥ K Q 8 3
♦ K 7 6 3
♣ 3

SOUTH
♠ A Q 7 6
♥ 6
♦ J 10 4 2
♣ A 8 6 5

SOUTH Fucik	WEST	NORTH Markus	EAST
1D	NB	1H	NB
1S	NB	2C	NB
3C	NB	3D	NB
3NT	NB	NB	NB

West led the two of hearts to the ten and queen, and East switched to his singleton club. This was ducked to West's king, and West switched back to hearts. This was the moment of truth for declarer. He went up with dummy's ace, crossed to hand with the ace of spades and led the jack of diamonds to the queen and ace. East won the third diamond with the king, leaving the following position:

NORTH
♠ K 8
♥ J 4
♦ —
♣ Q 7

WEST
♠ 9
♥ 9 7
♦ —
♣ J 10 9

EAST
♠ J 10 4
♥ Q 8
♦ 7
♣ —

SOUTH
♠ Q 7 6
♥ —
♦ 10
♣ A 8

East should now have cashed the queen of hearts, but he greedily exited with his remaining diamond. Declarer won with the ten, discarding a heart from dummy, and cashed his two club winners, the second of which squeezed East in the major suits. Jan Fucik therefore emerged with ten tricks and a good match-point score on the board.

This second hand was played by the Austrian champion Kurt Feichtinger after he and his partner, Karl Rohan, had been pushed into a slam by an opposing pre-empt. Dealer East; game all.

NORTH
♠ A 10 9 4 3
♥ A Q 9 7 5 3
♦ 7 4
♣ —

WEST
♠ Q 8 7 6
♥ J 8
♦ Q J 8
♣ J 6 3 2

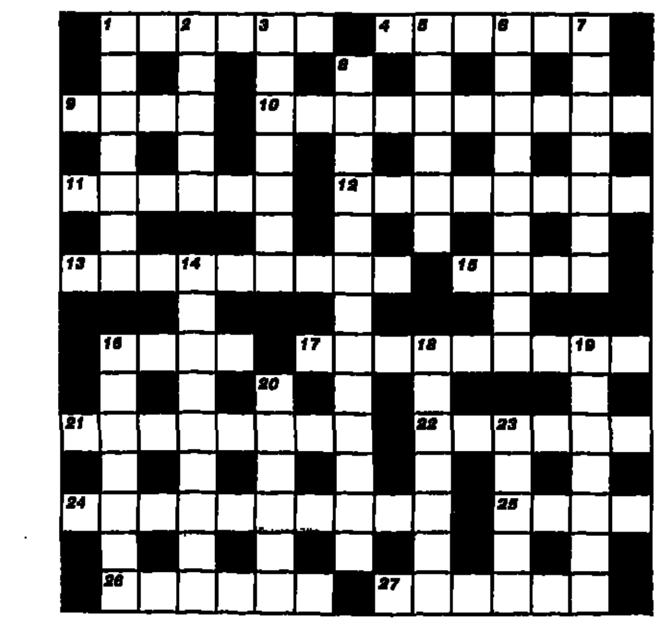
EAST
♠ 5
♥ K 6 2
♦ K 5
♣ K Q 10 9 8 5 4

SOUTH
♠ K J 2
♥ 10 4
♦ A 10 9 8 3 2
♣ A 7

South became the declarer in 6S after East had opened the bidding with 3C. West led the queen of diamonds, and south won with the ace and cashed the ace of clubs, discarding the losing diamond from dummy.

Declarer's problem on this hand was the shortage of entries to the closed hand. He could not afford to expend the king of spades at trick three, and he found the key play of running the jack of spades on the first round of the suit. When this held the trick, he turned his attention to hearts, running the ten of hearts to East's king. South was now in control. He ruffed the club return in dummy, crossed to the king of spades and drew trumps by way of a second finesse in the suit. The 3-2 heart break then gave him twelve tricks with no further difficulty.

Some players suggested afterwards that this was not a good slam, but I always maintain that any slam which makes is a good one!



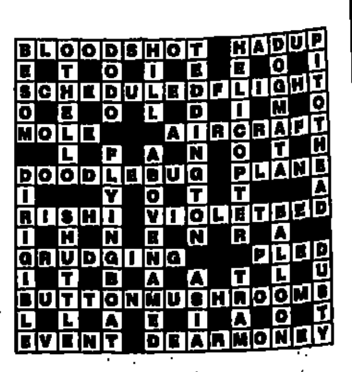
By ENIGMATIST

ACROSS

1. One who is often out on the tiles (6)
4, 15 & 23 Father, the one on my right 'and, with debris from rock bottom by 14 (10, 5)
9. Help with Lincoln's shirt? (4)
10. Now, December 25th (7-3)
11. Without credit, watched TV? (6)
12, 2, & 26 Parliamentarians in W.C.2 by 14 (3, 5, 2, 3, 6)
13. Invert June 6 1944 paper for lapses of concentration (9)
15. See 4
16. Fruit from the back of the milk-float (4)
17. Gets into a tizz — it's a matter of breeding (9)
21. Lover's stronghold, Windscale (8)
22. 14's 20, hurt between the wings (6)
24. Entrails, he insisted, need frying (3, 7)
25. Gem without its p-peer (4)
26. See 12
27. Said where to buy pig in tin? (6)

DOWN

1. Old instrument getting about by 14 (7)
2. See 12.
3. Wipe out with old absorber, we hear (7)
5. Midshipman's jacket (6)
6. "Whoa!" when breaking in hard (3, 2, 4)
7. The man's got listeners in funeral carriages (7)
8. Rise and fall in fall by 14 (9, 4)
14. Authoress arranged murder, I then concealed gold (2, 7)
16. Suckers provide shelter and incomplete game (7)
18. Comes when performance's over (5, 2)
19. Two cricket terms take too long (7)
20. Kindred Guardian setters getting in the money (6)
23. See 4



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Hoddle shows true grit

Alan Dunn's DIARY

THERE was a certain grim satisfaction among British soccer supporters after last week's round of European championship qualifying matches. England beat Yugoslavia 2-0, displaying new qualities of commitment and blood on the way; Scotland at last began scoring goals, though they would have preferred more than the 3-0 by which they beat Luxembourg; while Northern Ireland's young, rebuilt team worked unselfishly for each other in sharing a goalless match in Turkey.

England's was literally a bloody match and hard fought, although not as dirty as it may have appeared when the wounded were counted. Yugoslavia's substitute, Tuce, was unlucky enough to be carried off with what was thought to be a broken leg after a tackle 45 seconds after coming on to the pitch. The injury was eventually found to be strained ankle ligaments. England's Hoddle finished awash with blood from a head wound after he and teammate Hodge had collided. Hodge had to leave the pitch for nine stitches in a wound, while Hoddle later had eight stitches in his wounds.

As it was, goals eluded the English strikers, but two defenders, Anderson and Mabbutt, were nicely placed to finish off two moves that each had a touch of the Hoddle class about them. It was a timely moment for Hoddle to show that his elegant ability has an inner core of resolution, for he had the previous week been dropped by his club, Tottenham Hotspur, after a series of disappointing matches.

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SCOTLAND had hoped to beat Luxembourg in Glasgow by at least six goals, the margin that Belgium had achieved against Luxembourg in the same qualifying group. But to score three was some satisfaction for Scotland who had not scored in their previous two matches. The goals came from Cooper (2) and Johnston, and Scotland, like England, now lead their group with four points.

Northern Ireland, meanwhile, were just keeping in touch with England in their group by drawing in Turkey. It was a match of few scoring chances as two resolute defences held control, but Ireland's Hughes, aged 21, showed that he is in the mould of Jennings, his predecessor in goal, with two superb saves when Turkey really threatened. A draw was the least Ireland needed as they now face matches against England and Yugoslavia, twice, next year.

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DOMESTICALLY, soccer in England saw the first round of the FA Cup, when the survivors of many previous qualifying rounds among the non-league, part-time clubs join battle with the lower order of the professional League clubs. It is always a fraught time for the League clubs, many teetering on bankruptcy and looking for a decent run in the knockout cup to boost takings. This year's star down-at-heel club are Stockport County — and there was no change in their fortunes in the cup. With only one win from their 15 games they are rooted at the foot of the Fourth Division and favourites to become one of the first clubs to be relegated to non-league soccer when the new League set-up is introduced next year. Last week they replaced their manager, bringing back Colin Murphy. It was too late to help in the FA Cup, for County went out 1-0 at Caernarfon Town, a North Wales part-time team who play in the Multipart League. County were not alone in cup suffering, being joined especially by Burnley, now of the Fourth Division but a pillar of the First not too long ago. They went out 3-0 to Telford, who have a considerable record of defeating League opposition in the Cup. Among those living to fight again were Wolverhampton Wanderers, former holders but now in the Fourth Division, who were held 1-1 by non-league club Chorley.

In the English League Arsenal overtook Liverpool at the top of the ever-changing First Division, the first time in two years that the London team have been there. They did so by a remarkable win 4-0 at Southampton on Saturday and by Liverpool's failure in a live televised match a day later to conquer at home Sheffield Wednesday, finishing in a 1-1 draw.

In Scotland, Glasgow Celtic took a four points lead in the Premier Division by beating their nearest rivals, Dundee United, 1-0 the winner coming from Johnston.

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SQUASH provided world sport's most unbelievable story last week with the defeat of Pakistan's Jahangir Khan by New Zealand's Ross Norman, the world number two, in the final of the World Open at Toulouse. It was Jahangir's first defeat in five years and was the result of his loss of stamina and touch as well as Norman's ambition.

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YORKSHIRE CRICKET, already without opener Geoffrey Boycott for next season, will also have a new captain. David Bairstow, the wicket keeper, was replaced at the weekend by the 34-year-old left arm spin bowler Phil Carrick. He is the sixth captain in the past eight years. Bairstow was dismissed from the post after refusing to accept an invitation to resign. His time in charge was often beset by the political rumblings within the club over the role of Boycott, whose contract has not been renewed.

In Pakistan the touring West Indians clinched the limited over series 3-0 by wining the third of the five matches at Sralkot with four wickets and three balls to spare. Pakistan made only 148 for seven in their 45 overs and West Indies replied with 151 for six, in spite of their captain, Viv Richards, being out first ball.

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BRITISH HORSE RACING was saddened by the death last week of Jayne Thompson, the first woman jockey to be killed since women were granted licenses to ride a decade ago. Miss Thompson, aged 22, died a week after going into a coma from head injuries she received when her horse fell at a fence in a race at Catterick. Miss Thompson was top woman jump jockey two seasons ago.

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FRENCH RUGBY UNION regained pride at the weekend with a magnificent victory 16-3 over the touring All Blacks. And they did it by outplaying the New Zealanders at their traditional point of strength, the pack. Unlike the previous week, when the French submitted comparatively tamely, they attacked the All Blacks in the match at Nantes with such ferocity that the match could well have been as good as won by halftime had their kicking been as successful, Berot scoring with only one of his first five kicks. As it was the teams were level 3-3, but tries by Charvet and Lorieux sent the French clear.

CRICKET: Matthew Engel reports from Brisbane on the First Test

Australians hard to dislodge

AUSTRALIA fought back valiantly on the fourth day of the first Test in Brisbane, finishing at 243 for 5, largely thanks to an undefeated century from Geoff Marsh. At 35 runs ahead with five wickets in hand they have a chance of saving the match, but the odds were still slightly on England winning.

A tense and exciting day's cricket in the sultry heat saw Australia advance cautiously. Boon went for 14, Jones for 18 and it was not until Ritchie came in that Marsh found a solid partner. Ritchie went on to make 45. John Emburey finished the day with 2-78, England's best performance on a pitch which offered little help to the bowlers.

In their first innings Australia, inching towards the 257 they needed for safety, finally fell off the tightrope nine runs short when Graham Dilley had Bruce Reid caught behind. Team sport occasionally offers moments of the purest sweetness when disparate people, men of different motives and ambitions, men who might not even like each other much, achieve something worthwhile together. The pleasure is often fleeting; but the memory of that follow-on moment is likely to linger indefinitely for every Pom who was here.

One must assume that on Friday morning, England simply got tired of being a bumbling put-upon load of Clark Kents, nipped into a telephone box and came out as Superteam.

Botham was in the thick of the action, of course. Just after tea, with Australia 59 away from the target, only half the side out, including the night-watchman Zoehrer, and memories of Botham's marvellous century just starting to recede, Mike Gatting took the new ball and handed it to the champion.

Only one English bowler had not been impressive so far in the innings, and that was Botham. And now it was Dilley, at the other end, who struck, getting Ritchie and Waugh in successive overs. By the time Botham reached his eighth over of the spell, he was palpably tiring, the batsmen were starting to cream him and captain and bowler were getting a little totchy with each other about field placings. The traditional ululation began: why on earth doesn't he take him off?

At once, everyone had the answer. Chris Matthews was caught at second slip; two balls later Hughes was yorked. And after five cat-and-mouse overs at the final pair the innings was all over.

Dilley's last success gave him five for 56, his first five-for in a Test innings in his 23 Test matches. Only one of his previous 22 games ended in an England win — Headingley '81, and there his contribution was with the bat. Dilley himself was starting to feel slightly silly being called England's No 1 strike bowler. Now he looked the part.

The last time England made anyone follow on was at The Oval in 1985, which was also the last time they won a Test, the last time they scored 400 and the last time they played Australia. Suddenly, the opposing captain finds everything going ridiculously wrong: Gatting has out-generalled Border completely, and even Australia's long-term luck is looking doubtful; Geoff Lawson, whose exclusion from this team was probably Australia's first mistake (the decision to bowl first may have been the second), tried to vault a fence in morning exuberance after a work-out on Sunday and fell, sprained an ankle and became a doubtful starter for New South Wales against England this week and perhaps for the next Test.

And Botham now once again appears to Captain Border like Moby Dick. His century on Saturday was a masterful mixture of light and shade, hitting and thought. However, it took more than an hour for England to prise out Zoehrer. Then just after lunch, Dilley dismissed Marsh for a three-and-a-half hour 56.

Unfortunately for Australia, though, no one else shared his patience, except Emburey, who spent almost three hours twiddling the ball unhittably into the breeze, a performance of high-class bowling and endurance on a hot day.

Greg Matthews, however, who has developed into a first-rate fighting cricketer, tried forlornly to save his team, but it was all in vain and they were all out for 248.

ENGLAND — First Innings

B. C. Broad c Zoehrer b Reid	8
C. W. J. Athey c Zoehrer b C. Matthews	76
M. W. Gatting b Hughes	61
A. J. Lamb lbw b Hughes	40
D. I. Gower c Ritchie b C. Matthews	51
I. T. Botham c Hughes b Waugh	138
C. J. Richards b C. Matthews	0
J. E. Emburey c Waugh b Hughes	8
P. A. J. DeFreitas c C. Matthews b Waugh	40
P. H. Edmonds not out	9
G. R. Dilley c Boon b Waugh	0
Extras (b 3, lb 8, nb 3)	
Total	456

Bowling: Reid 31-4-86-1: Hughes 36-7-134-3: C. Matthews 35-10-95-3: Waugh 21-3-76-3: G. Matthews 11-2-43-0.

AUSTRALIA — First Innings

G. R. Marsh c Richards b Dilley	56
D. C. Boon b DeFreitas	10
T. J. Zoehrer lbw b Dilley	38
D. M. Jones lbw b Dilley	7
A. R. Border lbw b DeFreitas	7
G. M. Ritchie c De Freitas b Edmonds	41
G. R. J. Matthews not out	56
S. R. Waugh c Richards b Dilley	0
C. D. Matthews c Gatting b Botham	11
M. G. Hughes b Botham	0
B. A. Reid c Richards b Dilley	3
Extras	18
Total	248

Bowling: DeFreitas 16-5-32-2. Dilley 25.4-7-68-5: Emburey 34-11-66-0: Edmonds 12-6-12-1: Botham 12-6-12-2: Gatting 1-0-2-0.

TENNIS: David Irvine sees a classic Benson and Hedges final at Wembley

Noah comes good in Britain at last

IVAN LENDL cried off with an injured hip, Boris Becker had flu and John McEnroe lost in the first round. It could have been a recipe for disaster. In the end, no one cared. An epic final to the £265,000 Benson & Hedges championship at Wembley on Sunday — a match perhaps unrivalled this year for courage, commitment, skill and resilience — ended in a fever pitch of excitement with Yannick Noah, the world's No. 6, just holding off the unseeded Swedish 20-year-old Jonas B. Svensson to win 6-2, 6-3, 6-7, 4-6, 7-5.

Noah's performance proved, at long last, to the British public that he is one of the greatest attractions in the men's game. Svensson, who had never before been required to play five sets, gave everything he had.

Swedes had denied Noah titles in four previous Grand Prix finals this year. He was determined that it would not happen again and was particularly satisfied that he pulled through when not in his best shape.

On every previous appearance in London, Noah has left empty-handed. Now he says he is determined not to end his career without playing a great match on Wimbledon's Centre Court.

It was a flamboyant and elegant Noah who set out on what was to prove a 3 hour 48 minute journey. Svensson had the greatest difficulty coping with the tall Frenchman's serve. Time after time he was left floundering as aces flashed by.

By 4-4 in the third set, Noah had conceded only 18 points on serve — that included only one deuce game — but in the 10th Svensson suddenly began to lob the menacing Noah and earned his first break point. But with the court wide open, he netted a backhand.

Having survived that crisis, Noah moved on to the tiebreak. A match point eluded him at 6-5, another at 8-7, a third at 9-8 and a fourth at 10-9. Suddenly the favourite was looking flustered. When the fifth went by at 11-10 a depression set in that deepened when Svensson, on his fourth set-point chance, whacked a forehand pass with pinpoint accuracy to push the contest into a fourth set.

The deciding set, with Noah still able to pull out an ace, produced a game that was not unlike the tiebreak. At 4-4 it was Noah who found himself hanging on. Five times Svensson had break point, five times Noah slammed the door in his face.

And that, in effect, was that. Noah, admitting he was not sure whether to win points or allow his opponent to make mistakes, found himself the beneficiary of three Svensson errors at the end and a memorable contest concluded with the two embracing at the net.

For the sixth time the doubles title went to Peter Fleming and McEnroe; though not before they had saved a match point in the second-set tiebreak against the veterans Sherwood Stewart and Kim Warwick.

SOCCER RESULTS

TODAY LEAGUE — FIRST DIVISION: Aston Villa 0, Chelsea 0, Leicester 0, Everton 2; Luton 4, Nottingham Forest 2; Manchester City 2, Charlton 1; Newcastle 2, Watford 2; Norwich 0, Manchester United 0; QPR 1, Oxford United 1; Southampton 0, Arsenal 4; Tottenham 1, Coventry 0; Wimbledon 0, West Ham 1. Sunday: Liverpool 1, Sheffield Wednesday 1. Leading positions: 1, Arsenal (P 15, Pts 28); 2, Liverpool 15, 27; 3, Nottingham Forest 15, 26.

SECOND DIVISION: Barnsley 0, Derby 1; Blackburn 0, Hull 2; Bradford 4, Huddersfield 3; Crystal Palace 3, Ipswich 3; Grimsby 1, Sunderland 1; Leeds 0, Oldham 2; Millwall 0, Birmingham 2; Plymouth 1, West Bromwich 0; Reading 2, Brighton 1; Sheffield United 3, Stoke 1; Shrewsbury 1, Portsmouth 0. Leading positions: 1, Oldham (P 15, Pts 31); 2, Portsmouth 15, 29; 3, Plymouth 15, 27.

FA CUP — FIRST ROUND: Aldershot 1, Torquay 0; Bath 3, Aylesbury 2; Bishops Stortford 1, Colchester 1; Bournemouth 7, Fareham 2; Bristol City 3, VS Rugby 1; Bromsgrove 0, Newport 1; Caernarfon 1, Stockport 0; Chester 1, Rotherham 1; Chorley 1, Wolverhampton 1; Dartford 1, Enfield 1; Exeter 1, Cambridge United 1; Farnborough 0, Swindon 4; Frickley 0, Altrincham 0; Halifax 1, Bolton 1; Hereford 3, Fulham 3; Kettering 0, Gillingham 3; Middlesbrough 3, Blackpool 0; Notts County 1, Carlisle 1; Nuneaton 0, Rochdale 3; Port Vale 1, Stafford 0; Preston 5, Bury 1; Runcorn 1, Boston 1; Scunthorpe 2, Southport 0; Slough 1, Bognor 1; Southend 4, Halesowen 1; Spennymoor 2, Tranmere 3; Telford 3, Burnley 0; Ton Pentre 1, Cardiff 4; Walsall 2, Chesterfield 0; Wealdstone 1, Swansea 1; Welling 1, Maidstone 1; Whitby 2, Doncaster 2; Wigan 3, Lincoln 1; Woking 1, Chelmsford 1; Woodford 0, Orient 1; Wrexham 2, Hartlepool 1; York 3, Crewe 1. Sunday: Darlington 2, Mansfield 1; Northampton 3, Peterborough 0; Bristol Rovers v Brentford postponed.

FINE FARE SCOTTISH LEAGUE — PREMIER DIVISION: Celtic 1, Dundee United 0; Clydebank 1, Rangers 4; Dundee 1, Motherwell 1; Hamilton 1, Falkirk 2; Hearts 2, Aberdeen 1; St Mirren 3, Hibernian 1. Leading positions: 1, Celtic (P 17, Pts 19); 2, Dundee United 16, 25; 3, Hearts 16, 24.

FIRST DIVISION: Dumbarton 1, Clyde 1; Dunfermline 2, Queen of the South 2; Forfar 3, Airdrie 1; Kilmarnock 0, Brechin 1; Montrose 0, Morton 3; Partick 3, East Fife 3. Leading positions: 1, Dunfermline 20,27; 2, Dumbarton 20, 26; 3, East Fife 20, 23.

SECOND DIVISION: Albion 4, Cowdenbeath 1; Alloa 2, Arbroath 3; Berwick 2, Stenhousemuir 3; East Stirling 1, Stirling 1; Meadowbank 1, St Johnstone 1; Queen's Park 1, Ayr 1; Raith 2, Stranraer 1. Leading positions: 1, Raith 15, 23; 2, Alloa 15, 22; 3, Albion 15, 20.